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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE: Why we can't stop emphasizing the importance of relentless Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) Awareness campaign, especially in sub-Sahara Africa



Dr. F. N. Alaribe Nnadozie,
(Director, FWHPWI)

On March 04, the World celebrated International Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) Awareness Day. With initiatives of this type, the world as a whole utilize the power of human connection to fight health conditions by rallying together to spread knowledge and support for a range of courses. Information, educational, and fundraising events are often held to create a wave of positivity and empowerment for not only those living with health conditions, but also those engaged in health care, in organization and institution of health management, and in disease prevention. Thank goodness, humanity has gone a long way understanding that the commemorations are useful for all, especially for planning health safety and disease prevention. Thank goodness, awareness campaigns for particular commemorating day and event are often commendably substantial. But while this positive attitude lasts, we must still have to deal with the obnoxious reality that certain forms of diseases and health menace are so noxious and restless that they demand our relentless efforts to curb or control them. The HPV menace is one major noxious, pernicious, perilous, deleterious, dangerous, health issue we have to constantly measure with.

HPV is a group of (over 100) viruses that are very common worldwide. It is mainly transmitted through sexual contact; (not only penetrative sex but skin-to-skin genital contact is also a well-recognized mode of transmission). At least 14 HPV types are cancer-causing, of which Cervical Cancer is the most

common. Nearly all cases of cervical cancer can be attributable to HPV infection. And, infection with certain HPV types are also often responsible for cancers of the anus, vulva, vagina, penis and oropharynx.^{1, 2, 3}

In fact, there is no way one can overemphasize the HPV threat, given the propensity of the threat itself. Data from very reliable sources like a June 2019, Congressional Briefing on HPV-Related Cancers (by the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR), in partnership with a host of other organizations and institutions like the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO), the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC), etc.), highlight that globally, 630,000 cases of HPV-related cancers are diagnosed each year – thus representing a significant global disease burden. The congressional briefing also highlight that fortunately, due to advances in vaccination, screening and treatment, the elimination of cervical cancer – and ultimately all HPV-related cancers – is within reach. But this goal will require a strong commitment from governments, public health organizations, health care workers, parents and other stakeholders in the world.⁴

FWHPWI has no doubt, stronger commitment is needed in sub-Sahara Africa where reliable studies have revealed that HPV-related cancers (cervical, penile, anal, vulvar, vagina, head, and neck) are in the increase. And, the increasing incidence of these HPV-related cancers has been attributed to changes in lifestyle-related risk factors, most notably sexual behavior.⁵ In the light of facts, therefore, effective HPV awareness campaign need not be a one-day-ceremonial thing. I am confident that constant search for ways to get information to the grassroots, constant guard and relentless awareness campaign is the way to remedy the situation in sub-Sahara Africa.



Click to join us

share information about the cancers

FWHPWI'S EVENTS

FWHPWI's scheduled January 30, 2021 meeting and outreach was promptly held. Dr Sylvia Kama-kieghe (UK based General Practitioner, founder and Lead Clinician of AskAwayHealth.Org) was the guest speaker.

Dr Kama-kieghe's awareness talk was on 'COVID-19 Vaccine'. She highlighted challenges of coming into terms with the impact of a pandemic disease; and lucidly explained facts of vaccine hesitancy and scepticism. Dr. Kama-Kieghe provided clarity on some questions regularly asked by the public, such as: Is COVID-19 vaccine bigger threat than the disease? Does the vaccine transform human DNA? Who should have the vaccine? Etc.

Dr Kama-kieghe's talk also provided clarity on 'types of COVID-19 vaccine present at the moment', their content, manufacturers, how the vaccines work and some common observed side effects. As usual, participants were able to exchange questions and answers at the end of Dr. Kama-Kieghe's talk. And Dr. Kama-Kieghe urged participants to try and get vaccinated so as to help curb the spread of COVID-19 virus.

RESEARCH NEWS

European society for medical oncology (ESMO) explains facts about COVID-19 vaccination in cancer patients

Although evidence regarding vaccination in patients with cancer is limited, there is enough evidence to support anti-infective vaccination in general (excluding live-attenuated vaccines and replication-competent vector vaccines) even in patients with cancer undergoing immunosuppressive therapy. The level of efficacy may be expected to be generally reduced in certain populations of cancer patients with intense immunosuppression, such as recipients of haematopoietic stem cell transplantation. However, based on data extrapolation from other vaccines and the mechanism of action of the COVID-19 vaccines, it is conceivable that the efficacy and safety of vaccination against COVID-19 may be estimated to be similar to that of patients without cancer, although data from clinical trials are lacking. Beyond stem cell transplantation, the efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines can also vary in patients with distinct contexts of malignant disease (tumour type, disease extent, intrinsic or therapy-induced immunosuppression); however, the benefits of vaccination seem to significantly and substantially outweigh the risks.

[Read more](#)

Trouble for drug-resistant cancers

ETC-159, a made-in-Singapore anti-cancer drug that is currently in early phase clinical trials for use in a subset of colorectal and gynecological cancers, could also prevent some tumours from resisting therapies by blocking a key DNA repair mechanism.

[Read more](#)

Research shows Similarities in Risk for COVID-19 and Cancer Disparities

According to an article in the renowned American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) Journal *Clinical Cancer Research*, some root cause contributions for risk disparity overlap between COVID-19 and cancer. While cancer is a genetic disease that is influenced by tissue microenvironment, COVID-19 is an infectious disease that is enabled by cellular expression of angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 receptors. However, socio-economic disadvantages, level of education, lifestyle factors, health comorbidities, and limited access to medical care appear to fuel underlying risk for both cancer and COVID-19 disparities. For instance, African Americans demonstrating higher risk of acquiring and dying from either disease, are underrepresented in clinical trials involving cancer or COVID-19. Long-term disparities are present with survivorship from cancer and may be likely with survivorship from COVID-19; both have revealed untoward effects on post-diagnosis economic viability.

[Read more](#)

T Cell immunotherapy for Ovarian Cancer shows potential

Ovarian cancer is diagnosed in an estimated 300,000 women around the world each year. While significant advances have been made in conventional treatments, survival rates have only modestly improved. An Ovarian Cancer and Immunotherapy, November 2020 Cancer Research Institute (CRI) Virtual Summit discloses ongoing research for combating ovarian cancer with T cell Immunotherapy.

[Read more](#)

New strategy for fighting brain cancer

The mean survival of patients with the most common and aggressive type of brain cancer, glioblastoma multiforme (GBM), is 14 months. Huang, a member of the Cancer Biology research program at Massey, pinpoints a gene called YTHDF2 as a crucial link in a chain leading to the development and growth of GBM. It works through a process set in motion by another gene with a well-established reputation for driving cancer progression, EGFR. "These findings are exciting because we can potentially target YTHDF2 expression by using YTHDF2 small molecule inhibitors to control glioblastoma tumor growth and spread," says Huang.

[Read more](#)

HPV OVERVIEW/SYMPTOMS

HPV is the most common sexually transmitted infection (STI).

- Many people with HPV don't develop any symptom but can still infect others through sexual contact.
- Symptoms may include warts on the genitals or surrounding skin.
- There's no cure for the virus and warts may go away on their own. Treatment focuses on removing the warts.
- A vaccine that prevents the HPV strains most likely to cause genital warts and cervical cancer is recommended for boys and girls.

[Read more](#)

Share valuable information, experiences and ideas about women cancers and general healthy lifestyle



Cancer is a leading cause of premature death in every country in the world

But many of these deaths can be prevented

[The Cancer Atlas](#)



The COVID-19 pandemic is not over.

Never forget this practice!



It is necessary for your health now and always.

Do it often.

The best for you is to keep safe for yourself and for us all.

Do you know?

A scientist at Jackson State University, Mississippi obtained a US patent (6,849,604, issued 1/2/2005) on extracts of *Vernonia amygdalina*, an African medicinal plant sometimes called Bitterleaf (or Bitter Leaf). According to the patent, the extracts are effective against cancer. The inventor obtained samples in Benin City, Nigeria.

[Read More](#)

Pathogenesis of Keratinocyte Carcinomas and the Therapeutic Potential of Medicinal Plants and Phytochemicals

Keratinocyte carcinoma (KC) is a form of skin cancer that develops in keratinocytes, which are the predominant cells present in the epidermis layer of the skin. Keratinocyte carcinoma comprises two sub-types, namely basal cell carcinoma (BCC) and squamous cell carcinoma (SCC). In an article published this April in *Molecules*, Josiah, A.J. et.al. of Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) Pretoria, provides a holistic literature assessment of the origin, diagnosis methods, contributing factors, and current topical treatments of KC. One of the principal concepts highlighted in the article is the adverse effects linked to conventional treatment methods of KC and how novel treatment strategies that combine phytochemistry and transdermal drug delivery systems offer an alternative approach for treatment.

[Read more](#)

CancerNews: Africa

Agreements to lower prices and increase access to lifesaving cancer treatment in sub-Saharan Africa

In June 2020 the American Cancer Society (ACS) and the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI) announced agreements with pharmaceutical companies Pfizer, Novartis, and Mylan to expand access to 20 lifesaving cancer treatments in 26 countries in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. Purchasers are expected to save an average of 59 percent for medicines procured through the agreements.

[Read more](#)

Approval of breakthrough cancer medicine will offer 'renewed hope'

KEYTRUDA®, previously used to treat certain types of skin and lung cancers, has been approved for the treatment of bladder cancer and first-line non-small cell lung carcinoma (NSCL) by the SA Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA). The regulatory approval follows the review of studies and clinical trial data that showed the medicine was safe and effective against additional cancer types. This opens the door to many more cancer patients receiving effective treatment.

[Read more](#)

A research in South Africa seeks to understand possible solutions to promote adherence to medication and follow-up, needed for breast cancer

Living with breast cancer often causes women varied physical, emotional, and psychological challenges due to enduring treatment, with some describing treatment as highly traumatizing and a period of severe emotional suffering.

Total mastectomy remains the most common surgical treatment today in South African public health services, despite breast conserving surgery being the surgical treatment of choice in high-resource settings. Education around breast cancer prognosis and treatment and the fear of mastectomy and chemotherapy impede women from care-seeking, in part, because these treatments frequently cause significant side effects and are associated with emotional distress and trauma. Many women experience stress associated with physical mutilation of the body, emotional distress associated with a cancer diagnosis and treatments, and lingering depressive symptoms, particularly when women depend on an underfunded public sector where psychological support services are limited or non-existent.

[Read more](#)

Marine Resources also do serve for the fight against Cancer

Many patents have been issued for African marine resources – for development of cancer and other disease fighting items. Below are some examples:

COUNTRY	Eritrea
ORGANISM	Sponge extracts (<i>Raspailia sp.</i>)
Patent OWNER	Instituto Biomar, S.A., Ozonilla, Spain
COMMENT and/or QUOTE	The extracts are named "Asmarines" (as in Asmara)

COUNTRY	Mauritius
ORGANISM	Sea Hare extracts (<i>Dolabella auricularia</i>)
Patent OWNER	Arizona State University, US
COMMENT and/or QUOTE	...The sea hare was collected in 1972; but it and other collections continue to provide patented compounds for Arizona.

COUNTRY	South Africa
ORGANISM	Sponge extracts (<i>Haliclona tulearensis</i>)
Patent OWNER	PharmaMar S.A., Madrid, Spain
COMMENT and/or QUOTE	Source of toxins. From the patent: "collected in Sodwana Bay, Durban, South Africa"

Source:report entitled "Out of Africa: Mysteries of Access and Benefit Sharing", pp.27-28; published by Edmonds Institute, Washington USA.

[Read more](#)

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Just a few ways to reduce your risk of gynecological cancers advised by National Foundation for Cancer Research

➔ **Have your Pap test by age 21**

The Pap test looks for abnormal cell changes in the cervix to detect cervical cancer in its early stages.

➔ **Protect yourself from Human papilloma virus (HPV)**

Talk to your doctor about getting the HPV test and HPV vaccine. Also, limit your sexual partners and, when you do have sex, use a condom.

➔ **Don't smoke.**

Smoking increases the risk of different cancers including cervical, ovarian, vaginal and vulvar cancers.

➔ **Make healthy choices.**

It's important to maintain a healthy weight, be active and eat a healthy diet consisting of fruit, vegetables, lean proteins and whole grains.

➔ **Share your family history with your doctor.**

Genetic testing is now available to see if you carry a *BRCA1* or *BRCA2* mutation, which could put you in a high-risk category for ovarian and breast cancer. If you carry a genetic mutation associated to Lynch Syndrome, a heredity condition that increases your risk of colon cancer, ovarian cancer, uterine cancer, etc.

➔ **Contact your doctor if you notice any of these symptoms.**

- Abnormal vaginal bleeding or discharge
- Pelvic pain or pressure
- Abdominal or back pain
- Bloating
- Changes in bathroom habits (increased urination, constipation, diarrhea)
- Itching or burning of the vulva
- Changes in vulva color or skin (rash, sores, warts, ulcers).

nfc.org/

Image/Brief description of the potentials of the Marine Organisms



Raspailia Image source: habitas.org.uk/

Agelasines, asmarines and related compounds are natural products with a hybrid terpene-purine structure isolated from numerous genera of sponges (*Agela* sp., *Raspailia* sp.) The asmarines have shown potent antiproliferative activity against several types of human cancer cell lines

[Read more](#)



Dolabella Image source: Aquatic Life Wiki

Sea hares (family Aplysiidae) are a rich source of bioactive substances. Especially, over the past 40 years, the genera *Aplysia* and *Dolabella* have afforded numerous bioactive secondary metabolites that exhibit antitumor activity. For example, the depsipeptide dolastatin 10 and its analogue are currently in cancer clinical trials.

[Read more](#)



Haliclona Image source: Marine Aquariumsm SA

There are up to 112 nitrogenous secondary metabolites from classified and unclassified *Haliclona* sponges as well as from their symbiotic microorganisms. Most of these substances have only been found in *Haliclona* sponges, and display diverse bioactive properties with potential applications in new drug discovery.

[Read more](#)

Researchers have investigated the anti-cancer properties of aqueous extract from fermented African locust bean seeds on human cancer - hepatocellular (Hep-G2) and cervical (HeLa) cell lines

African locust bean (*Parkia biglobosa*) species represents one of the indigenous medicinal plants

available across West and Central Africa. The fermented African locust beans is a soup/stew condiment prepared by natural fermentation of *Parkia biglobosa* seeds. The condiment is well researched and reported to possess diverse nutritional and medicinal properties. This condiment can be eaten directly but it is mainly used as a spice in the preparation of various delicious meals. The fermented seeds are given various names depending on location, these include dawadawa in Ghana and northern Nigeria; iru in Benin Republic and southern Nigeria; and soubala in Burkina Faso. Various extracts from the fermented seeds of *Parkia biglobosa* have been studied for their usefulness in the prevention, treatment, and management of various disease conditions (using various models) including diabetes mellitus, hypertension, antioxidant and hypolipidaemic effect. There is however no study in the literature that has reported the cytotoxic activity of fermented *Parkia biglobosa* (FPB) seeds. The present study was done to investigate the cytotoxic and apoptotic effects of the aqueous extract of FPB seeds on Hepatocellular (Hep-G2) and cervical (HeLa) cell line. [Read more](#)

See below image of the *Parkia biglobosa* plant:



Image source: Wikimedia Commons

HEALTH AND LIFESTYLE

The most common gynecological cancers – cervical cancer, endometrial cancer, and ovarian cancer are frequently characterized by mutations which might be dietary-dependent

Presented epidemiological data indicate that female genital cancers are still a serious public health concern. Various first-line treatment strategies are administered based on the tumor stage and cell type, but surgery and chemotherapy are the most frequently included. Despite the significant therapeutic advances in recent years, the current therapeutic options for gynecological cancers are insufficient. Novel promising targeted agents with potential anticancer effects comprise of antiangiogenic agents, poly (ADP-ribose) polymerase (PARP) inhibitors, tumor-intrinsic signaling pathway inhibitors, selective estrogen receptor downregulators, and immune checkpoint inhibitors, which target the main causes responsible for cancer development. High-risk human papillomaviruses (HR-HPVs) are considered as the main etiologic factors of female lower genital tract malignancies.

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Webpage

For our Women
Cancer Survivors

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For this reason, HPV testing is an important part of gynecological cancer screening, and immunization against HPV using vaccines has been a major step forward towards gynecological cancer prevention. The most common gynecological cancers are cervical cancer, endometrial cancer, and ovarian cancer. The aforementioned cancer types are frequently characterized by mutations in K-RAS, H-RAS, BRAF, PTEN and TP53, among others, each of which might be dietary-dependent. In recent years, there has been an increasing number of studies indicating the possible anticancer effects of individual dietary components, especially those of plant origin. For this reason, the authors present the results of epidemiological, experimental, and clinical studies indicating the possibility of using a plant-based diet and its components in the prevention of gynecological cancer.

[Read more](#)

Growing Demand for Integrative Medicine (IM) among women with breast and gynecological cancers

There has been a marked increase in the demand for IM in the oncological patient population over the past years. IM is being used by up to 43% of all cancer patients worldwide (e.g., 50–70% in Germany, 45–49% in Australia, and up to 95% in the US). The use is particularly pronounced among breast cancer patients who apply IM strategies in up to 90% of cases. Owing to patients' varying cultural backgrounds, resulting in differences in their acceptance of IM, there is great heterogeneity in the implementation of IM around the world.

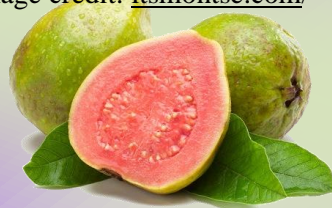
[Read more](#)

The contribution of physical activity, sedentary behavior, and obesity to cancer etiology

An estimated 30–40% of cancers can be prevented through changes in modifiable lifestyle and environmental risk factors known to be associated with cancer incidence. Despite this knowledge, there remains limited awareness that these associations exist. The purpose of this review article was to summarize the epidemiologic evidence concerning the contribution of physical activity, sedentary behavior, and obesity to cancer etiology and to provide an overview of the biologic mechanisms that may be operative between these factors and cancer incidence. Strong and consistent evidence exists that higher levels of physical activity reduce the risk of six different cancer sites (bladder, breast, colon, endometrial, esophageal adenocarcinoma, gastric cardia), whereas moderate evidence inversely associates physical activity with lung, ovarian, pancreatic and renal cancer, and limited evidence inversely correlates physical activity with prostate cancer. Sedentary behavior, independent of physical activity, has been shown to increase the risk of colon, endometrial, and lung cancers. Obesity is an established risk factor for 13 different cancer sites (endometrial, postmenopausal breast, colorectal, esophageal, renal/kidneys, meningioma, pancreatic, gastric cardia, liver, multiple myeloma, ovarian, gallbladder, and thyroid). The main biologic mechanisms whereby physical activity, sedentary behavior, and obesity are related to cancer incidence include an effect on endogenous sex steroids and metabolic hormones, insulin sensitivity, and chronic inflammation.

[Read more](#)

Image credit: itsmontse.com/



Guava has
antiproliferative
effect in MDA-MB-435 and
MCF-7 human breast cancer cell lines

Vegan Asparagus Recipe

To make Guava Salad

2 Large Guava, A handful of Fresh coriander, Ginger - 1/2 inch piece, Green chilli - 1 (optional), Salt (taste), A pinch of Black pepper powder, Few drops of Lime juice.

Begin with washing to remove impurities, remove the stalk and cut guavas into bite size pieces, finely chop ginger, green chilli and coriander. In a mixing bowl take guava pieces, chopped veggies, salt, pepper powder, lime juice, and mix to combine well.

Guava Salad is ready to serve.

Source: sunayanagupta.com/

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+27 604301958; +27 715512248
WhatsApp+27 610054712

Email:
info@foundationforwomenshealth.com
foundationforwomenshealth@gmail.com

<http://foundationforwomenshealth.com>