

April 2002 Meeting: Galen Knight of [Vitalectherapeutics](#) on "Close Doesn't Count in Biochemistry, No Matter How Many Tax Dollars You Throw At It."

by Dave Thomas : nmsrdaveATswcp.com (Help fight SPAM! Please replace the AT with an @)

New Mexicans for Science & Reason (NMSR) heard Dr. Galen Knight of [Vitalectherapeutics](#) speaking on "Close Doesn't Count in Biochemistry, No Matter How Many Tax Dollars You Throw At It." The meeting was on April 10th, 2002, in room 2402 of the UNM Law Building.

Knight once worked at UNM, as did his colleague Terence Scallen. There, they developed a compound they called vitalecthine, which they claim stimulates the immune system to destroy cancer cells. They contend that the companies UNM contracted with to develop the potential cancer cure are not really using the compound they developed, and that it hasn't had a fair test. But UNM said it had rights to the compound because of its agreements with its former employees, and sued them in 1999 for total rights on the compound. U.S. District Judge John Conway ruled in favor of UNM in September of 2001. Meanwhile, experimental drugs based on the work of Knight and Scallen are being tested on a few dozen patients in clinical trials. This is a complex and controversial case.

Harry Murphy's review of Galen's talk follows. NMSR thanks Dr. Knight for an interesting evening.

Knight's Talk -- A Review

by Harry M. Murphy

I went to the April NMSR meeting hoping to hear Dr. Galen Knight discuss new breakthroughs in cancer therapy, or at least some trends in modern biochemistry. Instead, what we heard was a diffuse ramble touting "Vitalecthine" as a potential treatment for a number of conditions, including AIDS, allergies, heart disease, immune deficiency, cancer and so forth.

Although it's clear that Knight has performed credible research in past years, including his 1982 dissertation on thyroid function while at the University of Texas and his work involving "vitalecthine" while at the University of New Mexico, it was unclear from his presentation how much research he is actually doing now, or whether any of it has been published in peer-reviewed journals. His research seemed to center on mouse tumors -- especially melanomas.

My distinct impression is that -- perhaps because of Knight's legal troubles with UNM -- he has broken away from mainstream medicine and joined those anti-establishment practitioners who preach the gospel of "environmental toxins", "hair analysis", "detoxification", "dietary supplements", "organic foods" and so forth. His disparaging reference to mainstream physicians as "allopaths" (a term coined by the founder of homeopathy) confirms my impression.

Among environmental toxins, including cadmium, lead, and mercury (including amalgam fillings), he seemed especially concerned with nickel -- a metal normally not considered especially toxic -- even suggesting that the possible nickel content of underwires in bras may contribute to breast cancer!

Knight asserted that taking oral "DEtox", a form of diatomaceous earth, can help remove such metal toxins from the body. (Diatomaceous earth consists of the siliceous remains of diatoms, minute one-celled algae typically found in swampy water.) Knight claimed that, due to a toxic amount of nickel in his body, he suffered from painful tendons in his left elbow and knee and that, over a year's treatment with "DEtox", his pain went away. And, of course, he attributes his "cure" to "DEtox". This anecdote is a classic example of post hoc reasoning.

In summary, I felt that Knight's talk was less about science and more about dubious health fads.

I urge anyone who may be impressed with Knight's presentation or with his equally diffuse web site, www.vitaletherapeutics.org, to check out Dr. Stephen Barrett's valuable web site, www.quackwatch.com. I especially recommend Barrett's reviews entitled "Signs of a 'Quacky' Web Site" and "Quackery - 25 Ways to Spot It".

KNIGHT TAKES ISSUE WITH MURPHY'S REVIEW OF HIS APRIL 2002 TALK TO NMSR

The May issue of NMSR Reports included a review of our April talk, which featured Dr. Galen Knight of Vitaletherapeutics speaking on "Close Doesn't Count in Biochemistry, No Matter How Many Tax Dollars You Throw At It." Dr. Knight sent in these comments about Harry Murphy's review. - editor

I've heard rumors that a rather unflattering review came out in your subsequent newsletter concerning the presentation I did at UNM's law school. I'm a little surprised at this since there wasn't much in the way of questions or opposing views expressed at the meeting and since the most vocal of those present were actually staying late to obtain more information. If such a review exists, I would like a copy of the critique to load on our web site, which is our policy.

NMSR's negative comments, if the rumors are true, will be the first we've ever had in more than 7 years operation, our non-profit reserving the glowing reviews of our website by scientists and doctors, until we had a foil, even an unsubstantiated one, to illustrate our willingness to establish a scientific forum for the free sharing of opinions and scientific information concerning health issues.

I've meant to contact you to let you know that copying 4 files and folders from the credit-card sized CDs will allow those with the CDs to run the web emulation off of the hard drives on virtually any computer. The files are...

directory.htm

vtlogofn.gif

...and the folders are....

Copyright.....

FooData

The copyright is to merely prevent those from i) fraudulently misrepresenting our work and ii) taking credit for it, as UNM and its licensee appears to have done in the past. We encourage people to distribute this useful information that appears to be helping people and animals.

It seemed that several of those present had a genuine interest in our work and may appreciate this information.

Good Health!!

Galen D. Knight, pHd

[Then, after reading Harry Murphy's review...]

Editor:

If Harry M. Murphy, who wrote the review of our seminar, is the gent who came with a whole notebook of information including an antiquated definition of "allopath," claiming that this was a disparaging term, then he is in denial. He saw the information on nickel, including a book by an entire scientific conference on the subject of nickel toxicity from Europe. Also, the NIOSH handbook put out by the US Government, reports that nickel causes sensitizing dermatitis, allergic asthma, nasal cavities, pneumonitis and cancer, the last on contact. This was also at the meeting for review by anyone interested.

One of our board members, Sylvia Grant, M.D., is a MD, cum laude, from Yale. Although Dr. Grant and I differ on the amounts of vitamin C needed in the diet (my position) as opposed to supplements (Dr. Grant's), I have the utmost respect for Dr. Grant and others trained as allopaths. I object only to those resistant to having their "Karma run over their Dogma." In his "review," Mr. Murphy conveniently ignores the back-to-back papers published in the prestigious scientific journal, Cancer Research, November 1, 1994, and other scientific publications listed on the website, itself having over 800 pages of information. It is hard to imagine how Mr. Murphy could have missed the website, since free copies on mini CDs were handed out at the meeting.

Mr. Murphy implies that we work on anecdotal information, which is simply NOT true. We have had numerous individuals report dramatic improvements in muscular/skeletal and other problems. Many, such as myself, have submitted to monitoring at their own expense before and after consuming the FDA-approved, food grade Diatomaceous Earth (that we refer to as DEtox for convenience). Thus, we evaluate a variety of physiological changes that occur to produce scientific data confirming the subjective improvements being made. Many have participated in cross-over studies that I would be happy to explain to Mr. Murphy.

Mr. Murphy appears to adopt the "politically correct" position that anything NOT developed at UNM is worthless. Ironically, UNM's position throughout the expensive lawsuit for ownership of vitalethine, etc., is that vitalethine, producing about 60% lifetime cure rates in melanoma @vtlbnzlf.htm and dramatic immune stimulation even in mAIDS mouse models, cannot exist or is worthless. If you want to die within a decade of retirement, probably of cancer or heart disease, then listen to Mr. Murphy.

Stephen Barrett of quackwatch.com was invited to review our website and apparently declined to do so. Ours is full of critical scientific information and data, including sulfur- and oxygen- (sic., DE) binding constants for a variety of metal toxins @vtlrefab.htm and an analysis of the relative dangers of various chemical elements @vtlmtltb.htm. Stephen Barret had his SLAPP (Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation) against a silicon implant survivors group thrown out of court. Obviously, suing sick women who are trying to warn others about what made them sick is NOT the best use of Dr. Barrett's time, intellect, and money. I'm reminded of Plato's Myth of the Cave, in which those "enlightened" pity those who are NOT. I choose proactive efforts to educate and help my fellow beings on this planet, over complacent pity. If you don't like that, then sue me! UNM did and wished they hadn't.

Good Health!!

Galen D. Knight, pHd

MURPHY RESPONDS

Editor, NMSR Reports:

I stand by my original review of Dr. Knight's talk.

As to nickel toxicity, according to references I've checked, nickel does not appear to be especially toxic, although some people do develop allergies to it. I can't vouch for the reliability of the reports in the European conference on nickel toxicity; I saw it for only a few minutes during Knight's talk.

Knight's own rebuttal belies his assertion that he doesn't rely on anecdotal reports. I would be far more impressed with double-blind clinical studies published in refereed scientific journals. Are there any?

If Knight refers to mainstream physicians as "allopaths," then what is he? "Allopath" is a term used by homeopaths, naturopaths and other quacks to disparage mainstream medical practioners.

Harry M. Murphy

FOLLOWUP by Galen Knight, sent June 11th, 2002:

Using Mr. Murphy's own referenced source of information, one can "largely" discredit his allegation that "allopath" is still a disparaging term. From Dr. Barrett's own web site, the current meaning is clear: "Allopathy/allopathic practitioner: Terms used to refer to mainstream medicine its practitioners. The term was coined by Samuel Hahnemann, the founder of homeopathy, originally as a pejorative term, though it has largely lost that connotation."

http://www.quackwatch.com/cgi-bin/mfs/24/home/sbinfo/public_html/01QuackeryRelatedTopics/OTA/ota14t.html?29#mfs

Mr. Murphy's position is "unenlightened" for other reasons. Although medical texts and doctors often refer to metal "sensitivities" as the more easily recognized lay term, "allergies", most scientists who have studied the immune system will recognize that one usually becomes allergic to something when it

is a fairly large molecule or particle, usually a peptide of about 8 amino acids in length, for example. Smaller molecules can cause immune reactions if attached to larger molecules in the body, but metal ions are much smaller than this 8 amino acid threshold and are NOT expected to cause "allergies" by themselves....

<http://www.VitaleTherapeutics.org/vtlmtltb.htm>

In contrast, nickel "sensitivity" (NOT "allergy") is merely having one's body so poisoned with toxic metal, or a combination of toxic metals, that any further exposure pushes the immune system and body into a toxic reaction to the nickel, the body's protective sulfur(S)-containing buffers for same (such as metallothionine) having already been saturated with nickel and these other "sensitizing" metal toxins....

<http://www.VitaleTherapeutics.org/vtlrefab.htm>

Dr. David A. Lawrence has shown, scientifically, that nickel overstimulates the hemolytic plaque assay, a measure of the pathway for producing "cytolytic" (cell-rupturing) antibodies [Toxicology and Applied Pharmacology 57, 439-451 (1981)]. When someone is thus poisoned, their immune system can overreact to virtually anything with which they are sensitized, confusing further the underlying cause of the "dis"ease, and perhaps setting up autoimmune and hypersensitivity reactions so distracting to the immune system that its "cytolytic" arsenal misses the cancer cells when they arise. Thus, the observed scientific facts are i) that nickel overstimulates the immune system, but ii) is known to be carcinogenic (NIOSH). My "allergies" to springtime pollen blooms, antiperspirants, and my previous inability to drink coffee and "heartburn" are gone, which I believe was made possible with the DETox program I put myself through to diminish my level of obvious nickel poisoning. I had the "scientifically documented", tell-tale, pinhead-sized blisters on the palms of both hands [Contact Dermatitis 1, 136-141 (1975)] and in my hairline where I was losing my hair, probably the result of poisoning from the nickel eyeglass frames that were also causing "sensitized" wheals where the bare metal (oxidizing green like copper) touched my face. Mr. Murphy did not bother to find out, before spewing his bile, that several of our studies, published in a scientifically refereed and prestigious journal (Cancer Research) were, indeed, blinded studies. His remarks seem more appropriate for a different type of NMSR organization, wherein "Science" and "Reason" in the acronym are replaced by "Slander" and "Rant" or "Rave". Because of the overly simplistic "allergic" dogma, presumably being taught in medical schools, even MDs sometimes don't recognize the tell-tale signs of metal poisoning. Our organization has received a note from an MD thanking us for information on our website, with which she finally had discovered the probable cause of her young daughter's many health problems. Her daughter had been falling asleep on the coins she was counting and playing with in bed, thereby causing "allergic" wheals (sic., toxic rashes) from the nickel and other toxic metals in the coins. Anecdotal? Sure! Inconsequential? Hardly, when it confirms other sound scientific data and evidence supporting the basic scientific hypothesis, and especially when it helps even one person to better health. The FDA has admitted that it "knows about the nickel poisoning from coins" when I complained to the local office. I don't let my daughters play with coins, and I encourage them to refrain from piercings and the wearing of metal jewelry.

These scientifically documented and admitted insights are in stark contrast to Mr. Murphy's undocumented and therefore insupportable allegations of nickel's relative safety. For example, NIOSH

is NOT in the business of regulating, or of even reporting, inconsequential hazards, the carcinogenic nickel in stainless steel being anything but safe. The capitalists in our society would have NIOSH for lunch if they ever tried to regulate "safe" toxins. Nickel's very name, "coined" when this element was discovered, further illustrates its long-recognized insidious nature, deriving from the German "nickel" and "kupfernickel", meaning "Old Nick's" and "Satan's" copper, respectively.

Such insights are not without additional consequences for improving our health. For all you soda lovers out there, read no further. If we neutralize stomach acid with carbonated sodas (evidenced by the ensuing belch), then we do not get good digestion of our food---for example, from proteins containing many amino acids to dipeptides (containing only two), tripeptides (containing three), and single amino acids. The larger peptides (>8 amino acids), proteins (larger still), and other large food fragments, when not properly sterilized and digested by stomach acid, at best putrefy in our gut, thereby probably predisposing us to food allergies and alimentary tract infections.

If you are emotionally attached to your allergies and you prefer to NOT partake of the very food and drink that you otherwise could enjoy for good health, then you should listen to Mr. Murphy. However, I cannot help you find Mr. Murphy since his telephone number and other contact information do not appear to be listed, nor has his educational background and other information been provided in support of his credibility. Until this is remedied, I will assume, based upon the provided limited sampling of his demonstrated analytical capabilities, that he has none.

<http://www.VitaleTherapeutics.org/vtlgkrsm.htm>

Good Health!!

Galen D. Knight, pHd

MURPHY RESPONDS

Editor, NMSR Reports:

I continue to stand by my original review of Dr. Knight's talk.

Knight's near-hysterical, ad hominem, response to honest criticism of his talk speaks far louder than anything I can say.

Harry M. Murphy

EDITOR FOLLOWS UP - June 24, 2002

Here are a few additional points to wrap up this topic.

One, Mr. Murphy has nearly 33 years experience in nuclear radiation dosimetry, including support of a number of biomedical studies. His experience and knowledge base are quite relevant to the topics under discussion.

Secondly, regarding the meaning of the term "allopathy" : here are the first 6 website hits (not counting duplicate hits) for "allopathy" that I found in a [GOOGLE](#) search. All of these sites, even the one by supporters of homeopathy (4th link down) reinforce the "disparaging" and "pejorative" nature of the term "allopath" in normal usage, contrary to Galen Knight's assertions.

<http://www.ncahf.org/articles/a-b/allopathy.html>

"...Although medicine never accepted the label of allopathy, nonmedical practitioners such as chiropractors, homeopaths, and naturopaths regularly misrepresent physicians as 'allopaths.' ..."

<http://skeptdic.com/allopathy.html>

"Allopathy is a term used by American homeopaths, naturopaths, chiropractors and other advocates of alternative health practices to refer to conventional medicine. ..."

<http://www.hcrc.org/faqs/allopath.html>

"More often, allopathy is a term used by quacks to smear their opposition. ..."

<http://www.geocities.com/homeolibrary3/>

"Hahnemann (1755-1843). He conjoined allos "opposite" and pathos "suffering" as a referent to harsh medical practices of his era which included bleeding, purging, vomiting and the administration of highly toxic drugs....No-one before Hahnemann had done this. No-one before had so clearly identified and laid bare the underlying creed of allopathy and chosen from its basis an opposite creed and then systematically investigated it and pushed it through into a new system. ..."

<http://www.theness.com/encyc/allopathy-encyc.html>

"Allopathy is a term coined by Samuel Christian Hahnemann 300 years ago to refer to the mainstream medicine of the time, and to be distinguished from his new discipline of homeopathy. ..."

<http://www.top-education.com/Therapies/allopathy.htm>

"Allopathy is a term used by homeopaths, naturopaths, chiropractors and other advocates of alternative health practices to refer to traditional medicine. ..."

Thirdly, the name of nickel indeed derives from the German word *kupfernickel*, but does not really reflect any "long-recognized insidious nature" of the element nickel *itself*. Instead, the term refers to the way this mineral, *kupfernickel*, looks like it contains copper, or perhaps even silver, but doesn't in actuality. The "deviousness" attributed to Nick (or Satan) doesn't involve any danger from nickel itself, but simply means that the mineral *looks* like it contains useful copper when it doesn't. See, for example:

<http://www.vanderkrogt.net/elements/elem/ni.html>

"...Originally it [kopparnickel, derived from the German kupfernickel] was a term of abuse used by the miners in the Erzgebirge (ore mountains), who searching for silver found this "inferior" metal. Nickel, as short from of Nicholas, was used more often as a nickname [the "nick" in this word is also from Nicholas!]. Thus kupfernickel can be translated as "old Nick's copper" (de Vries). Thomas Witzke wrote me that the German miners term "Kupfernickel" for the mineral now called nickeline (NiAs) is apparently because the mineral looks like a copper ore (metallic copper-red) but yielded no copper. ..."

<http://www.webelements.com/webelements/elements/text/Ni/hist.html>

"...The mineral used for colouring glass was called kupfernickel (false copper). ..."

Fourthly, I have learned a bit about nickel sensitivities, and they are quite real for some people. I agree with Galen Knight that people should avoid sleeping on coins, for example. But, I certainly can't find support for Knight's insistence on "the carcinogenic nickel in **stainless steel** being anything but safe" in the medical literature. The very thing that makes stainless steel "special" - its resistance to corrosion - is intimately related to the stability and non-reactivity of the metal constituents once they are alloyed in this special manner. One of our NMSR members, Bill F., is extremely sensitive to nickel; here are his comments to my query on this topic:

Dave,

I am definitely "allergic" or sensitive to nickel. My skin test, done by a dermatologist (Sky Connolly), indicated this. Furthermore, by carefully avoiding touching nickel, I have been able to reduce the problem. It will still take some time for all of the immune response to disappear because it persists for months after exposure.

I am not generally allergic to stainless steel. The nickel in it is usually bound so tightly that my skin cannot absorb it under most conditions. The absorption of nickel is enhanced by moisture on the skin or certain chemical conditions. Handling something rough (that has nickel in it) also adds to the absorption.

My chemical test kit for nickel does not usually show nickel (i.e., free nickel) when I test stainless steel.

This is an interesting discussion. - Bill

Conclusion: I think Harry Murphy hit it right on the nose.

David E. Thomas

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NEW MAY 2003 UPDATE - on Galen Knight's "Friend," Kristofer Dale **NEW**

*"You shall judge a man by his foes as well as by his **friends**." ~ Joseph Conrad ~*

After posting the articles above, I was contacted via e-mail by one Kristofer Dale, who had attended Knight's talk at NMSR. Dale is a friend and colleague of Galen Knight's, and prowls all over the Internet singing Knight's praises. Dale vehemently objected to Harry Murphy's assessment of Galen Knight's talk, and of my assessment as well. He demanded that I publish his letters on the NMSR website; I declined, because by that time I had already posted THREE of Galen Knight's letters regarding Murphy's review, and there was (AND STILL IS) **no mention** of NMSR's critical reviews, despite the fact that Galen Knight had told me previously that such critiques were routinely posted or mentioned on his web page. Dale wrote me recently to proclaim that "*I provided a legitimate response to a published review of a presentation I was eyewitness to, and yet you unilaterally decided to inhibit my freedom of speech to protect your organization's sketchy intellectual integrity....*"

Well, well, well.

Point 1: Kristofer Dale is apparently quite confused, and thinks his first amendment rights to Free Speech entitle him to editorial control of the NMSR Website. They don't, as I've informed him.

Point 2: Our e-mail exchange turned rather acrimonious after Dale started hurling ad hominem slurs at Harry and me. It's my opinion that this exchange reflected very poorly on Dale's ability to deal with controversial issues. But don't take my word for it - read the exchange, and then decide for yourself. It's all on line at <http://www.nmia.com/~barefoot/feedback.htm> . (WARNING - this exchange contains profanity. Read at your own discretion.) Even though Dale has posted my private letters to him, without permission, and without telling me he had done so (I stumbled upon his site quite by accident), I have decided not to pursue any copyright actions at this time. Dale's words do him little credit, and reflect poorly on his friend and colleague, Galen Knight. "*The wicked is snared by the transgression of his lips...*" - [Proverbs 12:13](#).

Point 3: Yes, Kristofer Dale and Galen Knight are friends, and work together to promote Vitaletherapeutics. For confirmation, visit this article from the Albuquerque Tribune, and hold your mouse over the second picture of Galen Knight (by the reporter's byline), and you'll see an image of Knight and Kristofer Dale salvaging radar dishes for herbal extraction gadgets.
http://www.abqtrib.com/archives/cancer/060701_cancer_canmain.shtml

Point 4: It's not just me. Kristofer Dale is all over the newsgroups, "defending" Galen Knight, hurling insults and epithets, and being a general annoyance. Again, don't take my word for it - see for yourself: <http://groups.google.com/groups?hl=en&lr=&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&scoring=d&q=kristofer+dale>

Point 5. Take a look at Dale's main web page, <http://www.nmia.com/~barefoot/>. See especially his rant at Albuquerque's mayor, and a respected judge, because a relative of Dale's did not receive special treatment. She was caught speeding, failed to rectify the matter, and was caught speeding again, causing her to miss a recital. For not supporting Celia Dale's "right" to break the law as often as she could, Kristofer Dale vilified Albuquerque Mayor Chavez and Metro Judge Nakamura as "Mindless Minions of Justice" in a "brainless bumbling bureaucracy." No, I'm not making this up! See for yourself:
<http://www.nmia.com/~barefoot/crapola.htm>

Point 6. If you, dear reader, had any lingering doubts about Galen Knight's rambling claims, consider this: Kristofer Dale defends Galen Knight by hurling outrageous insults, not by thoughtful scientific analysis. Kristofer Dale is Galen Knight's Friend. And, as Joseph Conrad said, "*You shall judge a man by his foes as well as by his friends.*"

- Dave Thomas

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NEW NOV 2004 UPDATE -UNM prevails in lawsuit on patents **NEW**

The [Albuquerque Tribune](#) reported on Nov. 11th, 2004 that "*The most expensive, most contentious and longest court battle involving the University of New Mexico and its scientists is over. A federal appeals court this week upheld a 2001 trial court decision giving UNM ownership of a potential cancer cure*

discovered two decades ago in a campus laboratory. 'We do consider this the end of the litigation,' said Charles N. 'Nick' Estes Jr., university counsel emeritus. The university spent approximately \$541,000 on the case. Of that amount, \$85,000 was spent on appeals. 'Undoubtedly, it was the most expensive case and the longest,' Estes said. 'It was in a class by itself.' The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit on Tuesday affirmed UNM's rights to the patents on the discoveries and ordered two former UNM scientists to pay \$63,887.33 in court costs for the four-year legal battle. ..."

Source: http://www.abqtrib.com/archives/news04/111104_news_payfees.shtml

There is more information on the resolution of this case in the proceedings of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, at <http://fedcir.gov/opinions/04-1281.pdf> . Here is a key finding by the court:

*With respect to Knight's royalties claim in particular, the district court granted summary judgment in favor of the University dismissing the claim due to Knight's **lack of evidence.** Regents of the Univ. of N.M. v. Knight, No. CIV 99-577 (D.N.M. Jan. 8, 2004) (Mem. Op. & Order). In granting summary judgment, the district court noted that the University argued that it did not owe Knight royalties until the patents produced a net income, which the University asserted had not yet occurred. Id. The district court held that Knight had not raised a material issue of fact challenging these assertions, stating, '**Instead, Knight's Response contains multiple amorphous and illogical arguments that do not pertain to the issue of royalties.**' Id., slip op. at 6. Knight has not directed this court to any evidence that a material issue of fact existed precluding summary judgment or that the district court incorrectly applied the law in reaching its decision. ... CONCLUSION For the above reasons, Scallen and Knight's arguments presented on appeal are without merit. Thus, we affirm the district court's dismissal of Scallen and Knight's counterclaims and award of costs.*

Read the Google Groups Discussion on misc.health.alternative:

http://groups-beta.google.com/group/misc.health.alternative/browse_frm/thread/e4bb810cb5def46f