

Notes on bacteria and mental health

Dr Christabelle Yeoh

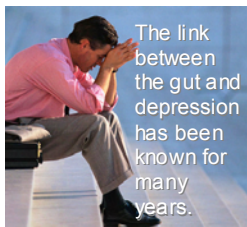
Are bacteria driving you crazy?

When a person suffers from mental illness, it is helpful to consider all the aspects that may contribute to this.

Levels of serotonin production and of essential fatty acids may be measured and the stress in

jobs or relationships may be investigated as causes.

But what about the effect of microbes? Already knowing that 'our gut is our second brain', the effect of microbes on both the bowels and the brain, has to be considered.



The link between the gut and depression has been known for many years.

Microbes colonise the bowels and participate actively in the body's function, as well as possessing the incredible power to dictate how one feels.

The link between the gut and depression has been known for many years.

Depression is often associated with digestive problems.

Antidepressants can have a therapeutic effect on digestive problems and are often used in the treatment of irritable bowel

(Continued on page 4)

Inside:

On the market:	2
Ask Dr Christabelle Yeoh	3
How to prevent tick bites	3
Dr Christabelle Yeoh's goodbye message	5
Help Breakspear Hospital Trust without it costing you a penny extra	6
Recommended recipe	7
New thoughts on brain cancer, mobile and cordless phones	8
What do we know about wireless smart meters?	8
New thoughts on links between pesticides and vitamin D deficiency	9
Renewed debate about GM crops with herbicide resistance	9
Did you know..?	10
Increased risk of Lyme disease in the UK	11
Bulletin board	12

Over £4400 raised for Trust in 10k run

On 11 April 2012, a donation of £4485 in memory of Mr Kevin Stewart was presented to Breakspear Hospital Trust by his wife, Mrs Julie Stewart, and his mother, Mrs Margaret Stewart.

The money was raised by participants and fundraisers who took part in the Baxters River Ness 10k Run, in Scotland, on 2 October 2011.

Mrs J Stewart wrote, "Kevin once told me that when he recovered he wanted to do some fundraising and give someone else the opportunity to receive treatment at



In memory of Kevin Stewart (1 February 1972 - 8 April 2011)

Breakspear. After he passed away, we knew we would do something to honour his memory and we wanted to carry out Kevin's wishes. Deciding to do the 10K was easy; it was the taking part that was difficult. We had a great day, it was very emotional crossing the finish line for all those

who had taken part but we knew Kevin would have been proud of us."

For the Stewarts' full story, please visit: www.breakspearhospitaltrust.org.uk



Breakspear Medical Group Ltd

Hertfordshire House
Wood Lane
Hemel Hempstead
Hertfordshire HP2 4FD
United Kingdom
Tel: + 44 (0) 1442 261 333
Fax: + 44 (0) 1442 266 388

On the market: certified organic health and beauty products

Important: while these products are certified organic, many do have strong scents and are not permitted on the ward at Breakspear.

Intelligent Nutrients is an American-based company that promises to “practice true, scientific technology to create products that are truly sustainable, effective and a pleasure to use”.

The products are made using food-grade ingredients, which are pesticide-free and mainly organic. The products are made using 100% renewable energy, as demonstrated by the Green E seal on the labels.

The products do not contain harmful phthalates, sulfates, artificial fragrances, parabens or petrochemicals.

The founder of Intelligent Nutrients is Horst Rechelbacher, who is best known as the founder of Aveda, which is globally renowned for

aromatherapy hair and skin care products. (Aveda was sold to Estée Lauder in 1997 and Rechelbacher is no longer involved.)



It has been reported that “Rechelbacher will happily drink his own hairspray at sales events”, demonstrating that he truly believes the products are safe.

Because of the exclusion of harmful chemicals and the company’s mission to produce nearly 100% organic products,

Breakspear is now offering patients the opportunity to try some of the products.

If you are interested in seeing or sampling the limited number of products on site, please speak to one of the Pharmacy Assistants.

Due to these products having strong, natural scents, patients are not permitted to use the products in or around the testing ward.

Breakspear Medical Bulletin

Breakspear Medical Group Ltd
Hertfordshire House
Wood Lane, Hemel Hempstead
Hertfordshire HP2 4FD
United Kingdom

Editor:

Carolyn Northcote Monro

Contributing writers:

Dr Jean Monro
Angelette Müller
Dr Christabelle Yeoh

Breakspear Medical Bulletin is a private publication that we aim to produce quarterly. It is for the promotion of environmental medicine awareness and Breakspear Medical Group Ltd. This newsletter is not intended as advice on specific cases but as a forum of information researched and stored at Breakspear Medical Group. We urge readers to discuss the articles in this bulletin with their health-care practitioners. Unauthorised reproduction of this newsletter, or quotation except for comment or review, is illegal and punishable by law.

© Copyright 2012 Breakspear Medical Group Ltd and its licensors. All rights reserved.

Introducing our new pain management clinic

Dr Prem Bajaj MD, MBBS, MMedSci, MSc Pain Management, PhD, FCGP, CoBC, who uses pain management techniques, such as acupuncture and auto-relaxation, is now offering pain management consultations at Breakspear.



Breakspear Medical Group is pleased to welcome Dr Prem Bajaj.

Dr Bajaj has practised medicine for over 33 years and medical acupuncture for over 20 years.

Dr Bajaj has written over 30 publications and has presented his work on pain management at over 25 international congresses.

For more information on how acupuncture and auto-relaxation may help you, request the “Pain Management” leaflet from Reception or make an appointment by calling Reception 01442 261 333 Option 3.

Ask Dr Christabelle Yeoh



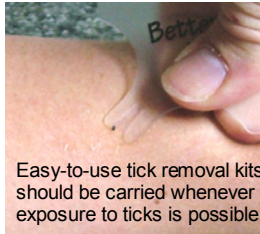
I found a tick attached to the back of my knee; I think it has been there for less than a day. Should I worry about getting Lyme disease?

The standard advice regarding the risk of a tick transmitting Lyme disease is based on tick attachment studies in animals. It is generally thought that the tick will not transmit the Lyme disease causing agent, *Borrelia burgdorferi*, if it is attached for less than 24 hours. After 24 hours, the risk of transmission is significantly greater and even more so after 48 hours.

However, there was a recent publication in November 2011 demonstrating 3 confirmed cases of Lyme where the tick was attached for less than 24 hours. It would be wise to be cautious, no matter how long the tick has been attached.

Because the tick bite is painless (as it is in the tick's best interest to go unnoticed so that it can feed quietly), it simply attaches itself, feeds and when it has finished, it drops off on its own. It is therefore commonplace for people who have been diagnosed with Lyme disease to have never noticed a tick bite in the first place. Not all people will suffer from the well recognised erythema migrans (bull's eye) rash following a bite by an infected tick. In those cases, the condition can go unnoticed for many years and potentially present later as a chronic inflammatory or autoimmune diseases.

The background health and history of other



Easy-to-use tick removal kits should be carried whenever exposure to ticks is possible.

concurrent illness or allergies suffered by the person are very important in assessing the prognosis following a tick bite. It is not standard practice to give oral antibiotics as a preventative treatment following a tick bite. However, it can be considered for patients who are deemed at high risk, who are pregnant or who live in Lyme endemic areas. At Breakspear, we advise that you talk to a doctor who can help you assess if you are considered 'high risk'.

It may also be a good idea to check with the local veterinary practice to find out if there is Lyme disease in the area where you were bitten. This is because statistics do not come easily from studying affected humans. Dogs and horses are the most common domestic animals to get Lyme and this can provide valuable information.

If one keeps the tick (in a jam jar, for example), it can be tested to see if it harbours the Lyme-causing agent.

Finally, it is because blood testing for Lyme disease is not totally reliable that people are often in a quandary over what to do following a tick bite. The blood tests are known to be poorly sensitive in the early stages of Lyme disease, hence it is not useful to test immediately following a bite. On the other hand, by the time symptoms have occurred, the best prognosis treatment window may have passed. Ultimately, prevention is the absolute key when discussing this matter. Be sure to dress appropriately when in tick-occupied areas.

See article on page 11 for more on the increased risk of Lyme disease in the UK.

The Health Protection Agency advice:

How to prevent tick bites

- Wear appropriate clothing in tick-infested areas (a long sleeved shirt and long trousers tucked into socks). Light coloured fabrics are useful, as it is easier to see ticks against a light background
- Consider using insect repellents, eg DEET-containing preparations
- Inspect skin frequently and remove any attached ticks
- At the end of the day, check again thoroughly for ticks, especially in skin folds
- Make sure that children's head and neck areas, including scalps, are properly checked

Notes on bacteria and mental health

(Continued from page 1)

syndrome (IBS). Altering a person's diet is an incredibly effective way of improving digestive symptoms and is mood-stabilising at the same time .

The connection between the brain and gut is reflected physiologically by the vagus nerve. This major nerve provides a bidirectional flow of information between the brain and the bowel.

Recent studies demonstrate that intestinal bacteria modulate one's response to stress and, to a huge extent, can modulate emotions through the neural messaging system. The bacteria make molecules, which are able to cross the intestinal mucosa and act upon the neurones in the gut wall, and then signal the brain.

In the past, immunologists and scientists thought that the immune system and the central nervous system were completely separate entities. In fact, they are irrevocably intertwined.

Recent studies show how significant the gut-brain connection is. The gut flora constitutes a profoundly large part of the immune system. Gut bacteria not only instruct the immune system but also modify responses to stress by acting directly on the nervous system.

Gut flora has a beneficial effect on the stress response system. A balanced intestinal flora helps to calm inflammation, which is harmful to the brain in excess. If intestinal flora were disrupted, it could lead to depression.

A study last year in Canada by McMaster University showed that mice that were given probiotics, thus reinforcing their intestinal flora, had a lower level of corticosterone (a stress response hormone) when they were submitted to stress testing. The research showed that healthy gut flora was needed for normal behaviour. Mice lacking gut flora behaved strangely and had learning impairments. Transferring regular mouse gut bacteria returned their behaviour to normal.

The scientists reported that the changes were independent of any other inflammatory activity, changes in the neurotransmitters and changes on autonomic nervous system (vagal or sympathetic) function. Their conclusion was that intestinal dysbiosis (deficit of good bacteria) would contribute to psychiatric disorders in

patients with bowel complaints.

Thinking about the reverse situation, what happens when there is a surplus of bacteria of an unsavoury nature?

This may occur in the gut, in the body or the brain. In medicine, there are a lot of established examples of how infections can make people do strange things, which can lead to the illness

In order to accurately assess mental health, diet, digestive function, microbial flora and any infections must be investigated first.

being considered to be psychiatric. But in fact, there are more studies demonstrating the effect

of a systemic infection causing a range of cytokines to be released, directly affecting functioning of the nervous system. These people should therefore not be considered as psychiatric patients requiring tranquilisers, antidepressants, antipsychotics or psychotherapy as the only management. They should be investigated for the underlying cause and efforts made to treat it. Psychotropic drugs are a useful aid when symptoms are not manageable but if the symptoms are masked, with no further consideration as to the underlying issues, there may be late-stage complications or other medical conditions that re-surface, due to an incomplete management of the problem.

Chronic Lyme disease has very recently been associated with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in adults. Both impulsive/hyperactive behaviours, as well as inattention, were significantly higher in patients with chronic Lyme disease than in the control group.

However, it is not yet understood what are the underlying mechanisms. Therefore it is not known, in adults, whether ADHD is a 'psychological' disorder, which could be treated with antibiotics. In children with ADHD, tics or other neurobehavioural problems, antibiotics are known to lead to a significant improvement where there is a demonstrable Streptococcus infection. Levels of anti-streptolysin or anti-DNase should be sought in this population because if a Strep-related neurological response is implicated, this can be treated. This condition is named Paediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorder Associated with Streptococcus (PANDAS).

The idea that mental illnesses can be caused by infection is not new, but seems difficult to accept because it has been ingrained that mental illness 'is all in your head'. In the 19th century, acute psychosis with hallucinations

(Continued on page 5)

Dr Christabelle Yeoh's goodbye message



In January 2006, I walked into Breakspear wondering what the future held.

At that time, I had recently left NHS hospital medicine, which was a great career, but somehow did not satisfy my expectations. I did not know exactly what I wanted back then. I loved people and medicine but felt that what I was doing in the NHS was not quite what I thought medicine should be.

I was a young energetic doctor who was not fazed by hard work. but I was confused by the lack of connectivity that exists in much of medicine.

When I sat in Dr Jean Monro's clinic, watched how she assessed patients, felt the depth of the medical care given to patients, I knew I had found what I was looking for!

In the last 6.5 years, I have learnt and experienced an incredible amount. Environmental medicine, as demonstrated to me by Jean, was comprehensive medical care.

My eyes were opened to so much more than I had seen in medical school, my time spent in medicine in Singapore or 5 years in the NHS.

I also understood why this type of medicine could not be achieved by many NHS doctors. Within that system, time is of the essence. Time is needed for growth and maturation in any process, be it in a plant, person or animal. But sadly, enough time is what most standard GP practices do not have. In private medicine, the appropriate amount of time is what people pay for.



I learnt so much from Jean but I learnt even more from my patients. I am grateful to all of you for showing me more than any text book could. In particular, I pay tribute to people who strive for more, looking for the pieces of the jigsaw to achieve better health. These people, who are patients or parents or carers, are the people at the centre of all that we do. This, together with the right medical knowledge and supportive staff, is what one can find at Breakspear.

As you can imagine, it has been very hard for me to leave. I devoted so much time to what went on at Breakspear and wanted so much more for the patients and worked to do all that I could to provide this. It could only have been another important part of life that could take me away: love and family.

As life would have it, I fell in love with a beautiful man who lives in Australia. He has a young daughter there and as the mountain could not come to Mohammed, Mohammed must go to the mountain.

I will remain active in environmental and nutritional medicine. I shall need to work for a while in hospital medicine to attain my Australian Medical Licence. But I assure you that I will be in touch with Breakspear and hope to remain connected.

Thank you to those who gave me lovely notes, cards, letters and presents. I acknowledge that it is sad to leave you. As Winston Churchill said, "If you are going through hell, keep going!"

Don't give up on your dreams! With hope and a light inside us, we will all make progress.

(Continued from page 4)

was thought to be due to a mental weakness, until in 1912 it was shown to be caused by a syphilitic infection of the brain. 30 years later, when antibiotics were in use, there was complete reversal of this psychosis. The condition was later renamed neurosyphilis.

Even an infection caused by Lyme borreliosis can lead to an acute psychotic state or panic disorder. In the literature, Lyme disease has been reported to present as paranoia, delusions, thought disorder, olfactory, audio and visual hallucinations, anorexia nervosa, major

depression, stereotypies, confusion, violent outbursts, mania, panic attacks, catatonia, personality changes and dementia.

It is clear that it is important to understand the underlying biological mechanisms that may be behind mental health and not rely solely on a psychosocial construct. Biological factors are based on physiology and biochemistry and are complex and multifactorial. In order to accurately assess mental health, diet, digestive function, microbial flora and any infections must be investigated first.

(References available upon request.)



Help Breakspear Hospital Trust

without it costing you a penny extra!

Ron White

Chairman of the Trustees, Breakspear Hospital Trust

Breakspear Hospital Trust (Registered Charity No. 1100205) will shortly be entering its 10th year of operation. In that time, we have helped many people secure treatment for their environmental illnesses who would otherwise not have the means to pay for it.

Not surprisingly, demand remains strong and exceeds supply, which is why I am asking all Breakspear Bulletin readers for help. And the good news is that the help I am asking for is very easy to give and won't cost you anything.

The question is, do you do any online shopping? It seems most people do some these days, and if that includes you, then you can help. There is a website called www.easyfundraising.org.uk which has links to over 2000 online retailers, and if you log on to that site you are easily then put through to your chosen retailer's shopping site and the retailer will make a donation to a charity or other cause which you can specify. Donations usually are a percentage of spend, some are more generous than others, some (for example, Tesco and Ocado) make a donation only for your first online shop, while others (such as Sainsbury's and Amazon) make a donation each time; you'll need to read the small print. A cheque is sent quarterly by easyfundraising to the Trust.

Of course I'm not asking you to change your shopping habits but if you do shop online, then you could help make a difference. Individual donations may be small but if all readers who are able to could make their online purchases this way, the total raised could be significant. For example, a typical grant by the Trust is £200, some are higher, and it is not hard to see how that much could be raised every so often, which means one more patient being helped.

If you would like to participate, all you have to do is visit the website: www.fundraising.org.uk, register and from then on, each time you shop online, go to www.fundraising.org.uk first, select your favourite retailer, go shopping and know that a donation will be made to Breakspear Hospital Trust.

Do you shop online?

If so, whenever you shop online, you can raise money (at no cost to you) for Breakspear Hospital Trust by following these simple steps:

1. Go to: www.easyfundraising.org.uk
2. Look for the "Support Your Cause" box, enter "Breakspear Hospital Trust" and click on "Support".
3. Enter your details to "Register as a supporter", if you are a UK taxpayer, tick the giftaid box to raise 25% extra on each donation, tick any other appropriate boxes and click "Register".
4. From then on, each time you shop, go to: www.easyfundraising.org.uk first, find your retailer and then start shopping, knowing that a donation will be made to Breakspear Hospital Trust.

Registered users also have access to retailer's special deals and opportunities for further donations that won't cost you a penny extra.

When you're logged in, you can see how much money you have raised for the Trust and you can see how much has been raised in total, too.

Once you are comfortable with the site, you can install "Find and Remind" which alerts you to the fundraising site each time you use one of the retailers. Installing this feature raises a one-off 50p donation to the Trust. You can also easily invite friends to join.

Simply by using: breakspearhospitaltrust.easysearch.org.uk to search, you can raise 0.5p per search.

On behalf of Breakspear Hospital Trust, and especially those people we hope to continue supporting, thank you for considering this simple method of shopping.

Recommended recipe

Angelette Müller

Often gluten-free flours are quite refined, with low levels of important B vitamins, minerals and fibre.

For example, white rice flour can have as little as 2 grams of fibre per 100 grams, while brown rice fibre may have 5 grams of fibre per 100 grams.

Coconut flour, which is used in this recipe, has up to a whopping 35 grams of fibre per 100 grams. By using coconut flour, it is quite easy to reach the recommended amount of daily fibre for adults of 18 grams and this may help towards relieving constipation.

Both almond and coconut flour have a much lower glycaemic load than rice flour, releasing sugar into the blood at a much slower rate.

As well as being grain- and gluten-free, this muffin is low in carbohydrates and can be eaten as part of a low carbohydrate diet or a specific carbohydrate diet.

For all the above reasons, this muffin can be a good breakfast choice for a variety of diets.

Use organic ingredients whenever possible

Certified organic foods are produced using farming methods where no artificial chemical fertilisers are used, pesticides are severely restricted, and genetically modified (GM) crops and ingredients are banned.

Recipe

appeal to readers

Do you have some favourite recipes that you'd like to share with other people who have common food allergies/sensitivities?

Email your recipes to the editor:
cmonro@breakspearmedical.com
 or send a copy in the post to the clinic, Attn: C N Monro.

Banana & walnut muffins

Free from grain and gluten



Ingredients

- 75 grams of almond flour
- 25 grams of coconut flour
- 1 teaspoon of baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon of sea salt
- 60 grams of chopped walnuts
- 2 tablespoons of butter (melted)
- 2 eggs
- 2 ripe bananas (with freckles)
- 4 tablespoons of honey

Method

1. Pre-heat oven to gas mark 3/170°C/325°F
2. Measure out the almond flour, coconut flour, baking soda, salt and walnuts into one bowl.
3. Lightly beat the eggs in a separate bowl.
4. Add bananas to the eggs and mash together.
5. Add the melted butter and honey to the banana mix.
6. Add the banana mix to the dry ingredients and mix until well blended.
7. Place in muffin tins and bake for 20 minutes or until golden brown.



New thoughts on brain cancer, mobile and cordless phones

For years there has been discussion about the health risks of mobile phones and, to a lesser extent, cordless phones. A recently published Swedish study examined the association between the use of mobile and cordless phones and malignant brain tumours.

One conclusion of the researchers of a study published in International Journal of Oncology was that the highest risk for brain tumours, both malignant and benign, was found to be in those who had used mobile or cordless phones for more than 10 years, especially on the side of the head where the phone is used.

The risk increased with latency time and cumulative use.

The risk of brain tumours was 4.9 times more for

the people who started to use mobile phones before 20 years of age.

The researchers, from the University Hospital of Orebro and Umea University, examined the mobile and cordless phone use of 1251 Swedes who were diagnosed with brain tumours between 1997 and 2003, using standardised questionnaires.

Researchers were able to obtain the required information from relatives of 346 of 464 (75%) deceased cases and 276 of 463 (60%) deceased controls without cancer as cause of death.

The information collected was then compared with the 2438 control subjects, who were matched for age, sex and social class.

The risk of brain tumours was 4.9 times more for the people who started to use mobile phones before 20 years of age.



What do we know about wireless smart meters?

The Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) includes smart meters as part of their initiative to tackle climate change.

The DECC website states, "The Government's vision is for every home in Great Britain to have smart energy meters..." and it is the Government's goal to have smart meters installed in most households between 2014 and 2019, although some energy companies are starting to install them now.

According to the DECC website, "Most smart meters that are being installed today use mobile phone-type signals to send meter readings".

Aside from the issues of data access and privacy, there are concerns about health-risks associated with wireless devices, particularly for children and those with electrosensitivity. (See article above, New thoughts on brain cancer, mobile and cordless phones.)

Electrosensitive people, who may suffer headaches, dizziness, nausea, short-term memory loss and other symptoms when using or near mobile phones, WiFi or other wireless devices, are petitioning to stop the nationwide use of wireless smart meters. Some are

Smart meter - an electrical device that records real-time consumption of electricity, water or gas and communicates collected information back to the provider for monitoring and billing purposes.

supporting establishment of a fibre optic network with optional wired home Area Networks as an alternative solution.

ElectroSensitivity UK <www.es-uk.info> provides information about electrosensitivity and gives suggestions of what action people can take to stop installation of wireless smart meters.

Working with ES-UK, the Radiation Research Trust, and Wired Child, MCS-Aware have started a national campaign to gather 100,000 signatures online or on paper petitions to raise awareness of electrosensitivity, citing that 3% of the population is affected.

The DECC website FAQ page currently states, "But it will not be a legal obligation on individuals to have one...[and] we do not expect energy companies to take legal action to fit a smart meter if they cannot get the householder's co-operation."

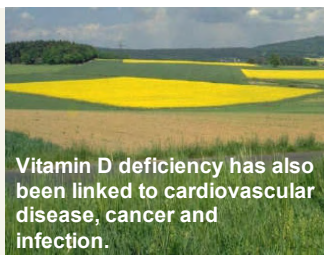
New thoughts on links between pesticides and vitamin D deficiency



According to researchers at Kyungpook National University in Daegu, South Korea, evidence has been found which suggests that exposure to certain organochlorine (OC) pesticides may be the cause of some cases of vitamin D deficiency.

(The research was published on www.plosone.org.)

Previously there have been both field and animal studies which suggested a possibility that OC pesticides can cause vitamin D deficiency but, to the researchers' knowledge, no human studies of exposure to any chemical as a possible cause of vitamin D deficiency.



Vitamin D deficiency has also been linked to cardiovascular disease, cancer and infection.

The conclusion of the study, which involved 1,275 male and female American adults, suggests that the background exposure to some OC pesticides leads to vitamin D deficiency in humans.

Vitamin D is important for good health, growth and strong

bones. Mild deficiencies may cause aches and pains, while severe cases cause problems such as rickets in children and osteomalacia in adults. Delayed tooth formation is another sign of vitamin D deficiency in children, as well as a vulnerability to infections, particularly respiratory. Vitamin D deficiency has also been linked to cardiovascular disease, cancer and infection.

Renewed debate about GM crops with herbicide resistance

Since the mid 1970s, glyphosate has been used commercially and been available for use in private gardens, under the brand name Roundup (produced by Monsanto). Some crops have been genetically engineered to be resistant to it. Soya was the first such crop, followed by maize, sorghum, rapeseed, alfalfa and cotton.

American Professor Emeritus at Purdue University, USA, Dr Don Huber has studied plant pathology for over 35 years and has strong beliefs of possible dangers associated with glyphosate, which is a broad-spectrum systemic weed-killer.

In Dr Huber's investigations, glyphosate-tolerant GM plants were found to be more susceptible to a range of plant diseases. Because glyphosate is a strong chelator, meaning that it immobilises critical micronutrients, rendering them unavailable to the plant, the nutritional efficiency of the plant is compromised. According to his research, micronutrients such as iron, manganese and zinc can be reduced by as much as 80-90% in GM plants.

He also believes that glyphosate can accumulate and persist in the soil for years, which destroys beneficial microorganisms in the soil.

In 2007, a former chairman of Monsanto Agriculture France was found guilty in a French

court for misleading the public by presenting Roundup as biodegradable and claiming that it left the soil clean after use.



Around the world, there have been other researchers and environmental organisations calling for the suspension of the use of glyphosate. For example, there was a study by Argentinean embryologist Andrés Carrasco, published in 2010, which led him to

conclude that glyphosate can disrupt human embryo development and linked it to deformities in children in soya-growing areas in Argentina.

When asked to choose between DDT, the banned organochlorine insecticide, or glyphosate, Dr Huber has been quoted as saying he would take DDT any day.

At this time, many governments have said that the data currently available did not justify a suspension or restriction of herbicides containing glyphosate.

A recent study shows that glyphosate is used on one third of all German farmland.

Glyphosate is not used on organically-farmed fields. GM crops and ingredients are banned under organic standards.

Did you know...?

April was IBS awareness month

The International Foundation for Functional Gastrointestinal Disorders (IFFGD) declared April IBS (irritable bowel syndrome) awareness month.

According to the NHS website, IBS is one of the most common digestive conditions. It is thought to affect 10-20% of people at some point. It is twice as common in women as men and can develop at any age.

Symptoms vary from abdominal pain to bloating, constipation, diarrhoea, nausea, heartburn, headaches and fatigue. Commonly people experience unexplained weight loss, a swelling or lump in the abdomen or back passage and/or bleeding and anaemia.

Although IBS is not typically associated with an increased risk of life-threatening illness, it can compromise a person's quality of life.

It has been reported that IBS is second only to the common cold as a major cause of absenteeism from work.

Treatment will involve changes to diet and lifestyle and may involve medication.

Experts are keen to stress to sufferers that "You are not alone - don't suffer in silence." If you think you or someone you know has IBS, talk to your doctor.



Low vitamin D levels linked to Parkinson's disease

A Finnish study concluded that having low vitamin D levels may increase a person's risk of developing Parkinson's disease later in life.

The 30-year study of 3000 people, which was published in the Archives of Neurology, found that people with the lower levels of vitamin D had three-fold higher risk of developing Parkinson's disease, compared with the group with the highest levels of vitamin D.

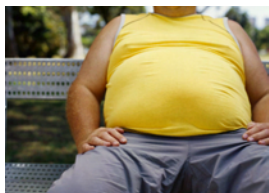
Parkinson's disease is a disorder of the brain that leads to tremors (shaking) while limbs are at rest, difficulty with walking, movement and coordination, which most often develops in older people.

Vitamin D, which has been nicknamed "the sunshine vitamin", is produced by the body when the skin is exposed to sunlight. As people age, their skin becomes less able to produce vitamin D. Vitamin D can also be obtained from some foods and, of course, from nutritional supplements.

(See article, New thoughts on links between pesticides and vitamin D deficiency on page 9.)

New book claims that today's fast food is addictive

Dr David Kessler, the former head of the United States Food and Drug Administration, has written a book about our expanding Western waistlines and the 3 causes, which he identifies as sugar, fat and salt.



Dr Kessler explains in his book, "The End of Overeating: Taking Control of Our Insatiable Appetite" that food manufacturers create products that find the right combination of sugar, fat and salt that stimulates appetite, which starts a cycle of desire and consumption that has resulted in a nation of overeaters.

In his book, Dr Kessler cites research that shows that it is not sugar alone that people enjoy and become seemingly addicted to, or else we would all be popping packets of straight sugar to satisfy the desire. The crucial factor is

the right combination of sugar, fat and salt.

The winning combination increases levels of the neurotransmitter called dopamine, which plays a major role in the brain system that is

responsible for reward-driven learning. This is teamed with packaging and advertising images and societal approval of food as an acceptable indulgence, and some of us learn to associate processed, high sugar, fat and salt foods with easily accessible pleasure, just like any other addiction.

Dr Kessler recommends returning to the structured meal habits of the past, with set meals and smaller portions and, of course, elimination of junk food.

Available at our Pharmacy

www.breakspearmedical.com/shop



Launching our new look

After 3 years of the online shop looking the same, we've made some changes to our online shop, including organising the products into new categories, and adding special offers.

Don't worry! The functions are (nearly) all the same; it is still easy to use, whether you are ordering items to be shipped directly or you wish to collect your order at the Pharmacy picked, packed and waiting for you to collect at a time suitable for you.

Visit Breakspear Pharmacy's online shop anytime of the day or night to order and pay securely for:

- nutritional supplements
- alternative foods
- toiletries
- household cleaning products

Increased risk of Lyme disease in the UK

The number of Lyme disease cases in England and Wales has almost trebled since 2002 with experts warning the true number of people affected by the infection from ticks could be much higher — *Daily Telegraph* 28 March 2012

Prior to the start of Tick Bite Prevention Week (26 March - 1 April 2012), the Health Protection Agency (HPA) stated that simple precautions must be taken to reduce the risk of tick bites and of Lyme disease.

According to the 2012 press release, "there were 905 laboratory-confirmed cases of Lyme disease reported to the HPA in England and Wales in 2010 – continuing a trend which has seen a rise in cases in recent years. The majority of cases (741) were acquired in the UK rather than overseas, with 86% of these (637) identified among residents in the south of England (the South West, South East and London)."

The overall figure for England and Wales was estimated at between 2000 and 3000 cases a year as in previous years, as some cases are clinically diagnosed rather than being laboratory tested.

The HPA reports that cases of Lyme disease are often acquired through recreational activities such as camping, walking, hiking and mountain biking.

What is Lyme disease?

- Lyme disease, also known as borreliosis, is a bacterial infection which is transmitted by tick bites.
- Ticks are small spider-like creatures which can be found in forests, woodland, heaths, moorland areas and in suburban parkland.
- All ticks should be regarded as a potential risk for acquiring Lyme disease.
- Usually Lyme-infected tick bites cause a red bullseye rash pattern, which is visible within 1 month after the bite.
- The signs and symptoms of Lyme disease can affect multiple body systems and produce a wide range of symptoms, which can start within days of the bite. When left untreated or inadequately treated, chronic symptoms, which affect many parts of the body including the brain, nerves, eyes, joints and heart, can persist indefinitely.

The Daily Mail 23 March 2010 reported that researchers at the University of Bristol had found that the number of pet dogs infested with ticks was far higher than previously thought. The study found that around 15% of domestic dogs are infested with common ticks, which has serious implications for the incidence of tick-borne disease.

Bulletin board



Introducing our new Quality Manager
Breakspear's new Quality Manager Gwen Roby started work at Breakspear in April 2012. Gwen has spent time in each of the departments to gain a better understanding of how each works and talked with patients about their needs. She will also be receiving training on Care Quality Commission compliance.

Breakspear's employee of the month



Early in 2012, Breakspear Medical Group introduced an employee of the month programme to recognise employees who 'go that extra mile'.

Lynda Jenkins, Accounts Clerk, was the first winner of the award, which was announced in February.



Ron Leon, Clinical Nutritionist Manager, was awarded the title in March.

Lynda Jenkins (top) was Breakspear's first employee of the month. Ron Leon (above) was the second award winner and Julie Matthews (below) was the third.



Julie Matthews, Medical Secretary, took over the title in April.

The result is based upon nominations, which are submitted by colleagues. Also, comments from patients, submitted on Patient Satisfaction Questionnaires may be taken into account.

Each winner receives a £50 Capital Bond voucher. These vouchers can be used at a wide range of retailers, leisure attractions, entertainment outlets and hotels.



New arrival

On 11 March 2012, Pharmacy Assistant Erin Healy gave birth to a baby girl, Maisie, who weighed 8 lbs 9oz. Maisie is Erin's first child and Pharmacy Manager Tracey Godfrey's first grandchild.

Dr Jean Monro presents lectures at two international conferences

From 1-3 June 2012, the Alborada Foundation and Vivo Sano Foundation hosted their 6th International Congress on Environmental Medicine in Madrid, Spain, for healthcare professionals, legislators and educators.

Dr Jean Monro was honoured for her work in environmental medicine and gave a presentation at the conference.



The following week, Dr Monro lectured at the Ireland Lyme Conference 2012 Tick Talk, at the Clontarf Castle Hotel in Dublin, Ireland. Her lecture was about Lyme supportive treatments.

Sarah Mills graduates with BA (Hons)

In 2005, Sarah Mills suffered from severe multiple allergic responses and could only dream of finishing university. After becoming a patient of Breakspear, she graduated from the Open University with a Bachelor of Arts with Honours Degree in Humanities with German and Music on 30 March 2012.

Miss Mills received her degree from the Pro-Vice Chancellor in the Barbican in London and received a congratulatory handshake from singer-songwriter, political activist and philanthropist, Annie Lennox, OBE, who had received an honorary doctorate.

See Miss Mills' article "How Breakspear Hospital Trust helped me" on page 9 in the Breakspear Medical Bulletin Issue 20.

