

June 9, 1978

News

The University of Texas Health Science Center at Dallas
5323 Harry Hines Boulevard Dallas, Texas 75235 (214)688-3404

CONTACT: Ann Williams
Office: 214/688-3404
Home: 214/279-9402

*****UTHSCD's Dr. Peggy Fry to testify at Senate subcommittee on nutrition and cancer.

DALLAS--Nutrition is a stepchild in some areas today. When Dr. Peggy Fry testifies before the Senate Subcommittee on Nutrition in Washington June 12, she will seek a favored status for more research on nutrition in the cause and treatment of cancer and for faster dissemination of the information already available on these subjects.

The assistant professor of pediatrics and nutrition and dietetics at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Dallas will testify as a member of the Diet, Nutrition and Cancer Program Advisory Committee of the National Cancer Institute. The committee worked from August, 1975, until early 1978 gathering information on cancer causes and therapy related to nutrition. After holding workshops with research scientists and patient care professionals, the committee, composed of physicians and nutritionists, made recommendations as to what areas need further research and compiled information already available.

The committee was responsible for the preparation of two patient handbooks now available from the NCI: "Diet and Nutrition: A Resource for Parents of Children with Cancer" and "Dietary and Nutritional Support During Cancer Therapy" (for adult patients).

"The well nourished cancer patient responds better to all kinds of therapy," according to Dr. Fry. But many cancer patients suffer nutritionally either from the disease itself or as a result of the therapy. A patient with gastrointestinal cancer may have trouble eating and keeping food down. And some types of cancer treatment cause the patient's sense of taste to change so that basic foods such as beef or pork taste bitter and unpalatable, and the patient needs to have other protein sources increased. The required chemotherapy and radiotherapy often cause nausea and vomiting.

These handbooks offer patients and their families information and suggestions on how to deal with these problems.

Leukemia patients are commonly treated with drugs and often these drugs cause nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain and mouth ulcers. Side effects vary from one individual to another and there is no one food or no one diet to alleviate these symptoms. The handbook offers suggestions that have proven helpful for some patients, however.

--more--

first add fry

For help with nausea, either from the disease or from the therapy, the book suggests small frequent meals, decrease of fluid intake and frequent snacking. Specific foods that may help are salty foods and broths, soda crackers, and mints. Foods that may contribute to nausea are excessively sweet foods, greasy foods, acid foods, and hot foods and spices.

More research is needed in the area of nutrition as a causal factor in some types of cancer. A high level of fat in the diet and overweight have been linked with breast cancer. A low fiber diet has been implicated in cancer of the colon and rectum.

The Senate subcommittee is now investigating the nutrition work in all areas of the National Institutes of Health in order to determine what funding is needed for additional work. The subcommittee will look at the work on cancer the week of June 12.

##

DISTRIBUTION: A,D,E,F,G