

DO ANTIOXIDANTS AND CHEMOTHERAPY CONFLICT?

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<http://www.cancerdecisions.com/112005.html>

In September, the American Cancer Society journal *CA - A Cancer Journal for Clinicians* published an article by Gabriella D'Andrea, MD, a medical oncologist at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center (MSKCC), New York. The article, titled "*Use of Antioxidants During Chemotherapy and Radiotherapy Should be Avoided*," is a sharp attack on the use of antioxidant supplements by cancer patients. The article received widespread public attention when it was picked up by the *Wall Street Journal*.

There is no doubt that the combined prestige of America's largest private cancer center (MSKCC), wealthiest health charity (ACS), and the world's largest daily newspaper (with an international circulation of 2.6 million), has created yet more negative publicity for antioxidants in general, and for their concurrent use with radiation and chemotherapy in particular. With every such attack, educated public opinion becomes increasingly uncertain about the benefits of these dietary components. But although the complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) movement cannot command the fire power of these giant institutions, thoughtful readers will want to probe behind the alarmist headlines and see how substantive are the charges against this use of nutritional medicine.

I have now written a full-length rebuttal of Dr. D'Andrea's article. In preparing this monograph I consulted closely with physicians who are actively involved in research on the topic, some of whom routinely use antioxidants in their practice. Here are some of their pre-publication comments on my article:

"An excellent article that clearly brings into perspective the issues raised."
-Kenneth A. Conklin, MD, PhD, University of California, Los Angeles

"Excellent and timely."
-Jeanne Drisko, MD, University of Kansas Medical Center

"Superb, very thorough, should convince anyone except those whose minds are closed." -Abram Hoffer, MD, PhD, FRCP (C)

"A comprehensive rebuttal that is also an excellent review of this complex topic." -Leanna Standish, ND, PhD, Bastyr University, Seattle

Overall, I conclude that D'Andrea's article:

- Cites ambiguous and/or negative studies but simultaneously downplays (and frequently fails to mention) positive ones.
- Claims (correctly) that only large-scale, randomized trials provide a valid basis for therapeutic recommendations, yet uses only laboratory data to back up the claim that harm results from the use of antioxidants.
- Exaggerates the degree to which the laboratory data diverge in regard to the safety and efficacy of antioxidant therapy, calling such data "conflicting and confusing." In fact, the great preponderance of data suggests a harmless or even a synergistic effect with most high-dose dietary antioxidants.
- Is inconsistent in its recommendations, since antioxidants are found naturally in common foods; yet Dr. D'Andrea does not extend her warning to include antioxidant-rich foods, especially fruit and vegetables.

- Ignores the wide-scale use by both medical and radiation oncologists of synthetic antioxidants given by prescription in order to control the adverse effects of chemotherapy and radiation.
- Resorts to "red herring" arguments, citing negative studies in the realm of cancer prevention, rather than quoting studies that focus on the specific issue of concurrent treatment.

A version of this monograph will also be published in a medical journal in Spring 2006. However, I have specifically adapted a pre-publication version of the monograph in order to make it accessible to readers who do not necessarily have a scientific background or any prior knowledge of the subject.

We are offering this publication in electronic format via the Amazon Honor System. After purchasing, you can then print it out for your doctor, family members or friends.

The suggested price is US \$9.95. However, we realize that some readers are unable to pay even this amount. Since we do not wish to deny anyone this important information, we are allowing you to purchase it for as little as \$1.00. In other words, please pay what you feel is appropriate and what you can afford. We hope that some of our better-off readers will make a donation of as much as \$50 to help defray the cost of producing and distributing this monograph. As with all Amazon Honor System payments, the charge is fully refundable for any reason within seven days.

The attack on antioxidants is the thin end of the wedge of a much broader attack against the complementary (CAM) approach to cancer. In fact, it is no exaggeration to say that the entire existence of a more humane form of cancer treatment is now imperiled by the coordinated power of medical orthodoxy. By purchasing this report you will be supporting an important effort to set the record straight about the actual track record of both chemotherapy and complementary medicine and to defend a patient's right to choose less harmful treatments.

I hope that all our readers will support this effort to rescue a simple and inexpensive mode of therapy from unfair attack. Your financial support at this juncture is absolutely necessary if we are to continue to build support for less toxic approaches to cancer treatment.

For the Amazon Honor System page offering this special report, please click on or go to:

<http://s1.amazon.com/paypage/P3H86Q1F6P49EY/002-0442854-5404054>

In addition, if you also want to purchase a printed copy of my earlier book, [Antioxidants Against Cancer](#), which deals in depth with this entire topic, or any of my other books, please click or go to:

<http://www.cancerdecisions.com/books.html>

DOUGLAS BRODIE, MD (1925-2005)

The integrative oncology and complementary medical community has suffered a great loss with the sudden death of Douglas Brodie, MD, of Reno, NV, on November 4, 2005.

Next week I will be publishing a full obituary and tribute to Dr. Brodie. The first of a series of articles on Herceptin will then be published the following week.

--*Ralph W. Moss, Ph.D.*