

HEALTH AND LIFESTYLE VICTORIA KLEEBERG Bowral

Look back to see you through the flu season

The *Sunday Mail*, Melbourne July 18 1976,, “Pig farmers, pork butchers and small goods producers have been complaining bitterly for months about the damage that the name has done to their livelihood...”

October 1976 and President Ford is about to commence the largest vaccination campaign in America’s history against a deadly strain of flu projected to kill many thousands, possibly millions.

At the same time on an American television program two Australian doctors report that diabetics and individuals with heart problems could drop dead after receiving the vaccine. This is exactly what happened to America’s Mafia ‘Godfather’ Carlo Gambino when a mafia rival persuaded him to have the vaccine. “Mafia boss dies after flu jab conspiracy...” ‘*Daily Telegraph*’

This was the 1976 swine flu outbreak, also known as the swine flu fiasco, or the swine flu debacle, a strain of H1N1 influenza virus that appeared in 1976. The outbreak is most remembered for the mass vaccination program it prompted in the United States by President Ford. The strain itself killed one person and hospitalized 13. However, side-effects from the vaccine caused 25 deaths and many more suffered a form of paralysis known as Guillain-Barre Syndrome before the vaccination campaign was abandoned.

Fast forward, to today and we have had bird flu, SARS, horse flu and now swine flu. It seems history repeats itself. It will continue to do so. **Reproduction is essential to all species and bacteria and viruses are no different. They will keep on evolving and finding appropriate hosts. We will keep on having new “diseases” or more correctly illnesses. As Sam Neil said in Jurassic Park, “Nature finds a way.”** Can medicine, science and drug companies change or conquer what nature has been doing for billions of years?

Winter is upon us and for many the flu and colds may have started. This year there is the added fear of swine flu, or is there? Is this flu any different to all the influenzas past? Drug companies make a lot of money out of our fear.

Not all “germs” are bad. There are more bacteria in our gut than there are cells in our bodies. We carry staphylococcus in our noses, meningococcal in the back of our throats, beneficial bacteria in the bowel and millions more on our skin. In fact, we could not survive were it not for the microscopic flora we carry around. It is worth noting that antibiotics “against life’ are not selective.

“The germ is nothing. The soil is everything” or as Pasteur said on his death bed, “Bechamp was right, it is not the seed it is the soil.” Illness is based in a fertile environment with a weak immune response. Poor nutrition from diets of processed non-foods, drugs, vaccines, chemicals, toxicity, stress all make fertile ground for bacteria and

viruses to flourish. Medicine has, for too long focused on “germs” and ignored the importance of the immune response. If immune responses are normal most germs will not flourish and this is where you, not your doctor, can determine the outcome of that first sneeze, if you respond quickly and actively aid your immune response.

Vitamin C is the first thing to reach for in big doses and frequently. Vitamin C is a small glucose molecule that most mammals make in a four-step process. Humans, a few species of apes and guinea pigs lack an enzyme required for this conversion of glucose to vitamin C. This is why we need to supplement on a daily basis and even more so when the body is under stress. Vitamin C is essential for the phagocytic or engulfing action of the white blood cells. Tissue saturation is required, fast, so several grams hourly for three doses at the first symptom may be all that is required to send that “germ” on its way or, more accurately, to boost the action of your white cells. Continue the vitamin C two hourly for the duration of the worst symptoms if you succumb. You will know when you need another dose if you are observant. Garlic too; it is the world’s best and most potent antibiotic. Used for thousands of years, no pathogen is resistant to it, unlike the many antibiotic-resistant bugs there are today.

Fever is the bodies’ response to infection. It signals your immune system to gear up. Fever doubles the speed and quadruples the production of white cells. No wonder you need extra vitamin C. Paracetamol is not helpful! However tempting it may be, it will stop the immune response dead. Better to take a hot shower, a hot water bottle, a hot lemon and honey, cinnamon and ginger drink to bed and sweat it out. Above all, rest and take yourself out of circulation. Reduce your food intake but keep your fluids up. Chicken broth, home-made of course, is ideal.

Don’t let fear override your common sense as the numbers of swine flu cases are constantly released. Most, if not all, deaths have occurred in people whose immune system is already compromised. Whether it’s a cold or flu, the solution is simple. Strengthen your immune system, act promptly and don’t compromise the immune response!

We have all heard that oft repeated phrase, “Feed a cold and starve a fever”. Well, an elderly patient reported to me many years ago that the original folklore went “If you feed a cold, then you will have to starve the fever.” Make sense?

Victoria is a homebirth midwife, herbalist, nutritionist and Buteyko practitioner, contact 4861 5744