



Healthwatch

by Steven Bailey N.D.

Along with your right to be informed by your health practitioner, is a need to objectively consider the information presented to you. There are a few major questions that will commonly assist an objective appraisal of your health program. These questions to your practitioner are as follows:

1. What is the diagnosis or probable diagnosis of my condition? How was the diagnosis chosen?

The diagnosis might be clear, yet inaccurate diagnosis is an all too common phenomenon in the U.S. If a lab test revealed positive results, ask the incidence of false positive results for this test. Many tests have greater than 20 percent errors in reliability. Likewise, many tests also give false negative results. If a test result has marginal reliability and/or the treatment plan indicated by the diagnosis is risky, ask for a second test or seek out a second opinion. If you really have a particular illness, a second opinion should only serve to support your practitioner's diagnostic accuracy. (False positive means a result says you have a particular laboratory finding when you actually don't.)

2. Are there any things that are known or suspected to contribute to or worsen the condition? Many illnesses are affected by diet, exercise, stress, management, etc. Find out if your practitioner has openly reviewed the research for your condition. Maybe some simple life-style changes obviate the need for a more risky procedure.

3. What are the treatment programs available? Which is considered the best? If a treatment program is dramatically effective it will probably be the only one offered. If there are numerous options of various drugs, etc., chances are that the success of any one is moderate at best. It is in this phase of grasping for a cure by trying a multitude of therapies

that many of America's iatrogenic (treatment caused) illnesses occur.

4. What is the prognosis, both treated and untreated? (Prognosis is a forecast of the probable course of a disease). In some diseases such as many lung cancers, the prognosis or cure rate is nearly identical between untreated and treated patients. Other diseases may have a prognosis that they will resolve themselves without treatment. Have your practitioner convince you that there is a realistic reason to risk the dangers of therapy. Do not accept a therapy purely because an illness is known to progress

to a severe state. A therapy should have a known benefit for the condition or it should be clearly labeled an "experiment".

5. What are the known risks of treatment, common side effects and how long has the treatment, etc., been used for this condition. Many drugs (over 5,000) are on the market without F.D.A. approval. Many approved drugs have shown the safeguards of the pharmaceutical industry to be dramatically deficient. The recently re-activated discussion of D.E.S. (diethyl stilbestrol) highlights the inefficiency of the drug testing procedures in the U.S. Over two million women were given D.E.S. before its dangers required its removal from the market. Today, even more problems are being associated with D.E.S. use. Unfortunately, D.E.S. is not unique to the American medical scene. When given a choice of a long-used substance versus a recent "breakthrough", consider the yet "untested on humans" status. If they are of equal therapeutic value, choose the "time honored" one, rather than participating in the experimental phase.

Many practitioners become defensive if you ask too many questions. YOU should decide when you are comfortable with your understanding of your illness. Be strong in protecting your rights, but realize that tact will aid the dialogue considerably. After all, your practitioner ultimately should have your interests at heart.

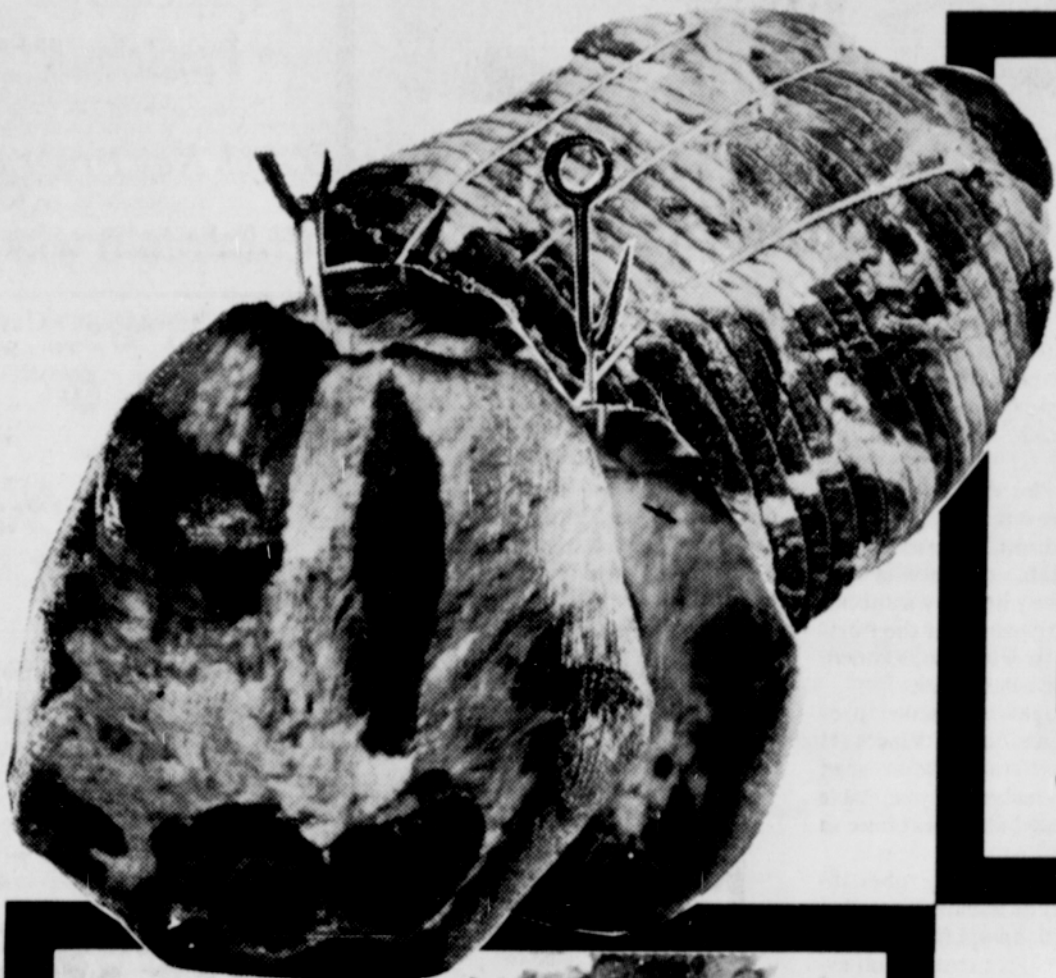
If you have any questions related to health matters, send them to *Healthwatch, Portland Observer, P.O. Box 3137, Portland, Oregon 97208*. I'll answer those I can on a regular basis in this column.



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Swap meet set for Expo Center

The Swap & Shop Assn. of the Northwest is proud to announce the Christmas Swapmeet Bargain Fair at the Expo Center in Portland, December 15 and 16.

The association will provide up to 100 selling spaces to charitable organizations at no charge for fund raising. For information call Washington toll free 1-800-562-0340.

The Swap & Shop Association's last two indoor swap meets held at the Seattle Kingdome and the Spokane Convention Center, were both sell-outs. It was encouragement from Portland/Vancouver people who have participated in these shows and the swap meets held each weekend at the Star-Lite and Midway drive-in theatres that prompted the association to hold an event in the Exposition Center.



School Lunch Menu

December 10

Chili w/Nachos
Mixed Vegetable Salad
Maple Glazed Roll
Pineapple Chunks
Milk

December 11

Italian Spaghetti
Tossed Green Salad
Warm Garlic Bread
Pear Halves
Milk

December 12

Wiener Wrap
Tater Tots
Carrot Wheels w/Ranch Dip
Peach Slices
Milk

December 13

Holiday Oven Baked Chicken
Snow Balls w/Gravy
Reindeer's Crunch Celery
w/Peanut Butter
Mrs. Santa's Warm Fruit Roll
Christmas Tree Cookie
Milk

December 14

Deluxe Cheeseburger on Sesame Bun
w/Lettuce, Tomato and Pickle
Tater Triangle
Apple Wedges
Milk



Prices Effective 12/5 Thru 12/11. Some Items Available Only At Safeways In Lloyd Center, St. Johns, 5920 N.E. Union Or 6400 N. Interstate. Sales Limited To Retail Quantities. No Sales To Dealers.

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