

Genes Declared Possibly Involved In Breast Cancer

Washington—(Science Service)—Genes may be involved in breast cancer. More cases of breast cancer are reported among the grandmothers, mothers, sisters and aunts of women with the disease than can normally be expected, an Ohio State University researcher has reported.

This excess appears to be at least partly due to the genes that determine heredity, Dr. Madge T. Macklin said here in the current issue of the Journal of the National Cancer Institute. If environmental influences alone were responsible for the higher breast cancer rate, females on a patient's father's side would not have the high rate that has been reported, Dr. Macklin explained.

Cultural patterns such as the tendency for women to have few or no children and to nurse those children they have are among the environmental factors commonly believed to play an important role in causing breast cancer. An objection to this interpretation, Dr. Macklin said, is that both paternal and maternal grandmothers show equally increased breast cancer rates over that found in the general population.

As evidence for the theory that heredity influences human breast cancer, the researcher cited statistical findings in her study of 840 Ohio residents.

More Deaths Than Expected
Of 327 aunts on the breast-cancer patient's father's side, 22 had verified breast cancers. Less than seven would be expected normally. Again, ten breast cancers were found in one group of grandmothers that "should" have had only about two and one-half cases. The higher rate was found even among those relatives who had been married, Dr. Macklin said. The observed breast-cancer deaths were about twice the number expected in the "ever-married" aunt group, and almost four times as much in the single group.

Three different groups were questioned in the survey. One was composed of women who had had surgery for proved breast cancer; the second was made up of both men and women with cancer in some organ other than the breast; the third group included women who had, at the time of interview, no symptoms or signs of breast cancer. The entire family of each participant in the survey was investigated thoroughly, Dr. Macklin reported.

Gaudy South Africa Flower Now in U.S.

Washington—(Science Service)—South Africa is offering a bright bloom for American gardens—the sunflower-like gazania.

As border plants, few summer flowers are more showy than these gaudy new hybrids, U.S. Department of Agriculture horticulturists said here. Recently developed in England, the hybrid gazania blooms vary from white through pure yellow to orange and deep pink. The flowers have dark green to almost black eye-spots at the base; however, some solid colors without eye-spots do occur.

The new gazanias flower all summer until frost and will grow best in sandy, well-drained soil. The plants, which usually form densely tufted clumps, are four to six inches tall.

Some plants are grown commercially now, but new supplies of cuttings and seeds arriving in the U.S. will make this flower widely available to interested gardeners within the next two years, Dr. F. G. Meyer, USDA botanist, said.

Grandmother Plans To Enter College

Denver—(UPI)—Mrs. Maxine Pastine, a 38-year-old grandmother, recently completed her high school education. She plans to enter college this fall.

She graduated this spring from Emily Griffith Opportunity School in Denver at about the time her son, Jerry Husky, 17, and her daughter, Mrs. Francine Pemberton, 20, were graduating from high school in Wheat Ridge, Colo. Mrs. Pastine will join her son this fall in enrolling at Colorado State College.

The family made a pledge several years ago that they were all going to be educated. Mrs. Pemberton won't be able to go to college this year because she has an infant daughter to care for. But she will follow her mother and brother later.

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