

Points of Interest

Magic Mushrooms and Cancer Therapy

A study at New York University has found that the controlled use of psychedelic drugs can help doctors treat cancer anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder. "I think

it made me more aware of what was so important and what was making me either sad or depressed. I think it was revelatory," said a participant of the study. The therapy aims to help patients enrich their lives in the time they have left.

Malcolm Ritter *The Canadian Press* April 23, 2010
<http://www.cbc.ca/cp/health/100423/x042319A.html>



Fungus Threatens Lives on the West Coast

A rare fungus has been infecting humans, dogs, cats and even dolphins in the Pacific Northwest. *Cryptococcus gattii* has shown to be lethal in 25% of human infections. The tropical fungus is thought to have made its way to North America via lumber shipping. There are no recommended precautions one can take against infection, but the threat remains minimal at this time.

Amanda Gardner *Health.com* April 23, 2010
<http://edition.cnn.com/2010/HEALTH/04/22/killer.fungus.pacific.northwest/index.html?hpt=T2>

Breast Milk Fights Cancer

A study at Lund University and the University of Gothenburg in Sweden has shown that an aspect of breast milk can kill cancer cells. HAMLET (human alpha-lactalbumin made lethal to tumour cells) may have been discovered years ago, but only recently has it been tested on humans – with great success. It has been shown to kill 40 different types of cancer and does not affect healthy cells.

University of Gothenburg *Science Daily* April 23, 2010
www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/04/100419132403.htm

Tobacco Product Attractive to Children

R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company has released a nicotine tablet that dissolves in the mouth as an alternative to cigarettes. The tablets are flavoured with mint or cinnamon. The US Food and Drug Administration, Harvard School of Public Health and others are warning consumers that the product may lead to the poisoning of children as the tablets are packaged similarly to candy or mints.

Physorg.com April 19, 2010
www.physorg.com/news190813913.html

Full Face Transplantation Performed in Spain

Partial facial transplantations have been performed before, but nothing like this. A young man whose face was disfigured in an accidental gunshot wound has received entirely new features after 24-hour long procedure. The operation took place at Barcelona's Vall d'Hebron University Hospital. Dr. Joan Pere Barret and his team replaced the palate, skin, nose, lips, cheekbones, facial muscles and teeth of the unnamed recipient.

Kate Devlin and Fiona Govan *Telegraph.co.uk* April 22, 2010
www.telegraph.co.uk/health/healthnews/7621154/Doctors-in-Spain-claim-to-have-performed-worlds-first-full-face-transplant.html

New Shape for Salt

Pepsico recently unveiled a new form of sodium chloride crystals. The crystals are said to reduce by 25% the amount of salt needed to retain the full flavour of its Lay's potato chips. Sodium is one of the factors involved in the development of high blood pressure (hypertension).

Kevin Drum *Mother Jones* April 19, 2010
motherjones.com/kevin-drum/2010/04/factlet-day

