

# RITAM Newsletter No 36 – December 2004

Dear Colleagues,

## **1. RITAM book – reduced rate for Africa, India and Pakistan**

After months of negotiations, the publisher has finally agreed to offer a 50% discount on all orders for our book going to addresses in Africa, India and Pakistan. I apologise to those of you living in other developing countries, but this is at least a start. The book should therefore be available to researchers in these areas at a cost of \$50.50, instead of \$99.99. If you use the promotional RITAM leaflet (available to all RITAM members from me on request), you are entitled to a further 15% discount, bringing the cost to \$42.93. We hope this will make the book more readily available to researchers in Africa, India and Pakistan. If you have any questions about ordering the book, please contact [merlinwillcox@doctors.org.uk](mailto:merlinwillcox@doctors.org.uk)

## **2. RITAM Guidelines for Electrocardiography**

Medicinal plants, like modern drugs, may have secondary effects on the cardiovascular system. Several antimalarials, including natural products (such as quinine and quinidine) and herbal medicines, have been reported to cause ECG changes, such as prolongation of the QT interval. Therefore RITAM guidelines for clinical studies on herbal antimalarials recommend performing regular electrocardiograms on patients before, during and after treatment with herbal medicines.

However, there have been no detailed guidelines on the best techniques for recording and interpreting ECGs to look for evidence of cardiac toxicity of herbal (or other) antimalarials. In order to plug this gap, we have drafted some basic guidelines to help standardise and improve the recording and interpretation of ECGs in this context. These will be sent out to members of the RITAM clinical development group, for comments and suggestions. We welcome feedback on these guidelines from anyone with an interest or experience in this area. If you have not received a copy, and would like to, please e-mail [merlinwillcox@doctors.org.uk](mailto:merlinwillcox@doctors.org.uk)

## **3. Future Meetings of Interest**

- A. **A. 20th Annual Joint Scientific Conference (AJSC) Of The National Institute For Medical Research (NIMR), 21-24 February 2005, Arusha, Tanzania** The theme for the 20th AJSC is: "The burden of diseases in poor resource countries: meeting the challenges of combating HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria". This year, important plenary and parallel sessions are devoted to several sub-themes, including "Malaria and neglected and emerging diseases" and "Traditional Medicine and Practices: Potential opportunities". For further information, contact: Secretariat, Annual Joint Scientific Conference, National Institute for Medical Research, P.O. Box 9653, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Tel: +255 =9622-2121400; Fax: +255-22-2121360 / 2121380, Email: [ajsc@nimr.or.tz](mailto:ajsc@nimr.or.tz) Website: [www.nimr.or.tz](http://www.nimr.or.tz)

- A. **B. The 11th NAPRECA on Natural Products and Drug Discovery, Antananarivo,**

### **Madagascar, 9-12 August 2005**

The Natural Products Research Network for Eastern and Central Africa (NAPRECA) is a regional scientific body devoted to the study, promotion and development of the science of natural products with emphasis on chemistry, biological activities, botany, economic exploitation and conservation. It is customary for NAPRECA to organize a regional symposium every two years and it has, to date, organized ten such symposia, each of which has drawn a considerable number of participants from the region and from other parts of the world. The main topics of the 11th NAPRECA Symposium will cover all aspects of natural products and drug discovery. The Symposium will be preceded by a one-week pre-symposium workshop for young researchers coming from different parts of the region. Subjects to be covered include the following:

- • Role of ethnopharmacology in drug discovery
- • Target identification and validation for diseases of concern to African countries
- • Screening of extracts for bioactivity
- • Herbal remedies
- • Vector control agents and repellents
- • Monitoring the isolation of active constituents
- • Structure elucidation of bioactive compounds
- • Medicinal chemistry
- • Bringing active compounds into drug development

For further information, see: <http://takelaka.dts.mg/rafita>

### **A. C. Women's Health and Asian Traditional Medicine conference, 23-25 August 2005, Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre, Malaysia.**

Under the theme Promoting Complete Healthcare For Women, the conference will bring into focus those Asian healthcare traditions used by generations of women to care for their families and their own health needs. The conference will stimulate a process of ensuring that the best of these traditions are preserved, promoted, evaluated and used as culturally appropriate strategies for meeting women's healthcare needs in contemporary society. In addition to contributions from within Asia, contributions are invited from around the world on the use of Asian Traditional Medicine in promoting complete healthcare for women. For more information, see: [www.whatmedicine.org](http://www.whatmedicine.org)

### **A. D. Medicine and Health in the Tropics, Marseille, France, 11-15 Sept 2005**

There will be a special symposium on "Natural anti-parasitic agents", chaired by Dr Gerry Bodeker (RITAM Chair) and Dr Milijaona (Institut Pasteur de Madagascar). Dr Ben Gilbert from Fiocruz, Brazil, has agreed to be the keynote speaker. RITAM members are invited to submit abstracts for consideration in this symposium. Further information on the conference is on the website at [www.iftm-pharo2005.org](http://www.iftm-pharo2005.org)

### **A. E. Fourth MIM Pan-African Malaria conference, Yaoundé, Cameroon. 13-18 November 2005.**

For further information see [www.mim.su.se/conference2005](http://www.mim.su.se/conference2005)

## **4. Recent Publications of Interest**

### **The following are recent publications by RITAM members:**

Tomabu Adjobimey, Inès Edayé, Latifou Lagnika, Joachim Gbenou, Mansour Moudachirou, Ambaliou Sanni (2004). Activités antiplasmodiales in vitro de quelques plantes antipaludiques de la pharmacopée béninoise. C. R. Chimie 7 (2004) 1023–1027

Weniger B, Lagnika L, Vonthron-Sénécheau C, Adjobimey T, Gbenou J, Moudachirou M, Brun R, Anton R, Sanni A (2004). Evaluation of ethnobotanically selected Benin medicinal plants for their in vitro antiplasmodial activity. Journal of Ethnopharmacology 90(2-3): 279-284.

G. Bourdy, P. Oporto, A. Gimenez, E. Deharo (2004). A search for natural bioactive compounds in Bolivia through a multidisciplinary approach Part VI. Evaluation of the antimalarial activity of plants used by Isoceño-Guaraní Indians. *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* 93: 269–277

Iwalewa EO, Agbani EO (2004). Effects of autacoid inhibitors and of an antagonist on malaria infection in mice. *Brazilian Journal of Medical and Biological Research* 37: 1199-1204

Ojewole, J. A. O., Nundkumar, N. and Adewunmi, C. O. (2004). Molluscicidal, cercariacidal, larvicidal and antiplasmodial properties of *Barringtonia racemosa* fruit and seed extracts. *BLACPMA* 3, 88-92.

### **The following are other recent publications of interest:**

Bhatt, H. A.; Gogtay, N. J.; Dalvi, S. S.; Kshirsagar, N. A. (2004). Safety issues in Indian traditional medicine. *International Journal of Risk & Safety in Medicine* 16 (2) 73-82.

Boyom FF et al (2003). Anti-plasmodial activity of essential oils from some Cameroonian medicinal plants. *Phytochemistry*, 64(7): 1269-1275.

Finger JM, Shuler P (2004). Poor people's knowledge: promoting intellectual property in developing countries. Washington: The World Bank.

Khare CP (Editor), 2004. *Indian Herbal Remedies: Rational Western Therapy, Ayurvedic and other traditional usage*. Heidelberg, Germany: Springer Verlag. ISBN 3-540-01026-2  
[An encyclopaedia of plants used in Ayurveda and Indian traditional medicine, with information from the E monographs, etc].

R. Pavela (2004). Insecticidal activity of certain medicinal plants [rapid communication]. *Fitoterapia* 75(7-8): 745-749

### **5. Websites and Internet Resources of Interest**

Scott C. SA plant repels mosquitoes. 15/12/2004 09:26 -  
(SA) [http://www.news24.com/News24/Technology/News/0,,2-13-1443\\_1636188,00.html](http://www.news24.com/News24/Technology/News/0,,2-13-1443_1636188,00.html)

The Nation. Malaria Herb Now Turns Top Cash Crop. The Nation (Nairobi)  
December 16, 2004. See: <http://allafrica.com/stories/200412150853.html>

id21HealthNews Number 63, November 2004: treating malaria. <http://www.id21.org/health>

World Bank (2004). *Indigenous Knowledge: Local pathways to Global development*. Knowledge and Learning Group, Africa Region, The World Bank. Available to download at:  
<http://www.worldbank.org/afi/ik/>

#### **Global Health Database**

The CAB Health Database has been expanded and refocused so as to provide a more comprehensive public health database (aimed at both developed and developing world) now known as Global Health. Unlike other databases, this focuses on developing country content ( 40% of the content is unique to this database and 27% of that is derived from developing country publications). For further information, see: <http://www.globalhealth-database.org/>

#### **Google Scholar**

Google.com is in the process of launching a rapidly developing service of great interest to researchers/academics called Google Scholar located at: <http://www.scholar.google.com>  
At this site, you can download and save papers from many journals concerning malaria. This site will be of great assistance to individuals working in areas with Internet access but no access to the major Internet libraries.

**Malaria Learning Resource (In English And In French) On The Impact Malaria Website**The resource has been designed to enable the learner to find out about malaria from different points of view; it

covers all aspects of the subject and acts as a web portal to guide the learner towards other sources of information. It is subdivided into 10 Units, each with well-defined learning objectives. Each topic is covered in a hierarchic fashion, going from the basic to the more advanced, and is carefully illustrated and linked to further reading of either published literature or other relevant web sites. The project is still being developed and the various sections are regularly up-dated (only sections on Biology, Vectors, Diagnosis, Immunology and Biochemistry are currently available).

See: [http://www.impact-malaria.com/EN/EPS/Formations\\_et\\_cours\\_internationaux/](http://www.impact-malaria.com/EN/EPS/Formations_et_cours_internationaux/)

#### **Free Malaria CD-ROM Updated**

Royal Perth Hospital's trilingual malaria education CD-ROM has been updated and is ready for distribution to medical/educational institutions or centres free of charge. This CD-ROM is available in English, French and Spanish and should be particularly useful to those centres that do not have reliable Internet access to the Internet. The English Internet site contains sections on diagnosis, prophylaxis, treatment and history as well as an innovative interactive "Test & Teach" self-assessment module. It is an ideal site for clinicians, scientists, healthcare professionals and students.

See: <http://www.rph.wa.gov.au/labs/haem/malaria/index.html>

### **6. New members**

We welcome the following new members who have joined since the last newsletter:

Tomabu Adjobimey, Research Fellow, University of Bonn. Has worked on antimalarial plants in Benin.

Prof Clement Adewunmi, Director and Research Professor, Drug Research & Production Unit, Faculty of Pharmacy, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria.

Dr (Mrs) MILLOGO Hassanata, Senior Researcher, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique et Technologique (CNRST), Institut de Recherche en Sciences de la Santé (IRSS), Département Medecine et Pharmacopée Traditionnelles/Pharmacie, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

Dr Rokia Sanogo, Lecturer and researcher in Pharmacognosy, University of Bamako, Mali.

Richard Sawadogo, Researcher, l'Institut de Recherche en Sciences de la Santé, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

Many thanks to all those of you who have me your good wishes for Christmas and the New Year. I would also like to wish all RITAM members a very happy Christmas, and a happy, healthy and successful New Year.

*With best wishes,*

*Merlin Willcox (Secretary, RITAM)*