

The Power of Choice

By Hamid Bakhteyar, Pharm.D., R.Ph

We live in truly exciting times! The past 100 years have seen unparalleled advances in science and technology. We have come from “potions and snake oils” of the late 1800s to modern medicines resulting from years of research and utilizing mathematical modeling and employing pharmacokinetic parameters. Now, we have more choices than ever before—and we’re just scratching the surface!

In the near future, diagnosing and treating every patient the same way will be a thing of the past. There will be genetic testing and individualized medication therapy to achieve optimum therapeutic outcomes. Genomic testing and DNA mapping are exciting scientific breakthroughs. This is the beginning of a new era in medicine and in health. It is estimated that there are over 1,000 genetic tests clinically available while the FDA has only reviewed five of them. Our knowledge and understanding is expanding rapidly proving that one size does not fit all!

What does this mean and why is this important? Ever wondered why you may not experience all or most of the side effects listed in the package insert or patient leaflet of your medicine? Ever experienced side effects that were not even listed as “known” side effects of your medication? Consider the following:

Post-marketing-surveillance data has shown that Asian-Americans respond differently to Crestor® than Caucasian-Americans. Why, you might ask? In March 2005, a warning was added to the label of Crestor indicating the increased risk of rhabdomyolysis (serious muscle damage) in Asian-Americans. The new label also recommends a reduced starter dose—5 milligrams a day—for Asian-Americans. A clinical trial found that Asian-Americans taking Crestor had higher concentrations of the drug in their blood than did Caucasians taking the same dose. This discrepancy increases the risk of muscle damage due to differences in enzyme systems governed by genes.

Drug Topics points to research that has revealed as many as 7 percent of Caucasian women and a significant portion of African-American women are unable to benefit from Tamoxifen® because they lack the liver enzyme that normally activates the drug.

Paul Zane Pilzer, in his book, *The Wellness*



Dr. Hamid Bakhteyar at work in his compounding pharmacy

Revolution, points out that “Today, with a simple swab on the inside of the mouth, it is possible to examine a person’s DNA and predict his or her probability of developing certain diseases. Using this information, specific exercise, food, vitamin, and supplement-based therapies could be designed—adding years in both quantity and quality to the life of a consumer.”

At Carolina Compounding Pharmacy & Health Center, we are all about customized medicine. We offer confidential consults provided in a private setting designed to identify and work toward meeting patient-specific needs. This is because we understand that we are not all the same, and each of us has individual and distinct health needs.

One example of our custom-made approach to wellness is saliva test kits that can be used to determine the amount of hormones available to the tissues relevant to menopause and andropause. These results and other patient-specific information can be utilized by the physician and pharmacist to custom-tailor a unique medication regimen. This is instead of a “cookie-cutter” approach to dealing with every woman or man’s natural hormonal changes. In addition, supplement/vitamin consults

offered will help clients work toward their optimal health goals and objectives.

Do you have choices? Yes, you do! You can choose to be on a typical medicine regimen like so many others and “hope for the best.” Or, you can choose to have your therapy refashioned, with your doctor’s guidance, to your specific needs with a program of treatment customized to fit you. You have choices! **|||**

Dr. Hamid is a chemist and registered pharmacist. He earned a bachelor’s degree in chemistry from Campbell University in 1990, and worked for nine years in Research Triangle Park in environmental chemistry, clinical research, medicinal chemistry/analysis, and bio-technology. He earned his Doctor of Pharmacy degree from Campbell University in 2003, and has been a pharmacy manager in Cary for over two years, and founded Carolina Compounding Pharmacy & Health Center in January of 2006.

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