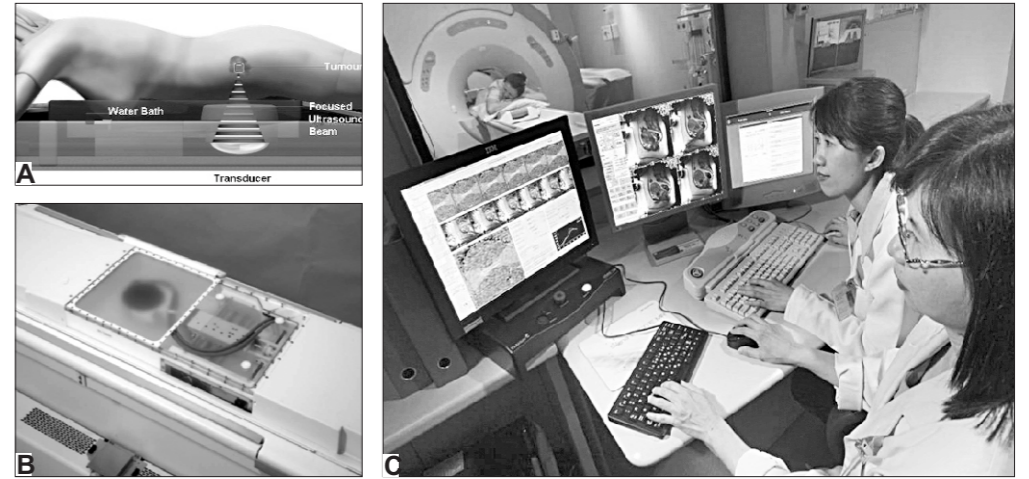


## Fibroid? Worried about surgery? Ultrasound could treat it!



A: The schematic presentation of the procedure. B: The ultrasound machine. C: A gynaecologist is looking at the fibroid and treating it at KKH by the MR guided ablation of fibroid by ultrasound.

TAREQ SALAHUDDIN

Operation like hysterectomy or myomectomy was the only option for the treatment of fibroids. A fibroid or uterine fibroid is a benign tumour in the muscle fibres of the uterus. It is a most common gynaecological tumour in women, affecting at least 20 percent of women above 35 years old. Until now, most treatment options are invasive surgical procedures like hysterectomy (removal of the uterus), myomectomy (partial removal of the uterus) and angiographic embolisation. There was no conservative approach for treating a fibroid that produced symptoms. Now doctors can offer simply an MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) guided ultrasound instead of surgery for the treatment of uterine fibroid (actually it is a very sophisticated procedure!).

American Society for Reproductive Medicine has recently made its way into Southeast Asia with JCI accredited KK Women's and Children's Hospital (KKH) in Singapore. MR-guided focused ultrasound ablation provides a non-surgical treatment alternative without the need for anaesthesia, incisions and hospitalisation. During treatment, magnetic resonance imaging enables the doctors to see 3D images of the fibroid and surrounding organs. High intensity ultrasound waves are then used to heat the area where the fibroid is located, killing the cells. Sedation may be given to allow the woman to relax during the 3-4 hour procedure.

"One major benefit of this treatment is that it preserves the uterus and cervix while sparing the healthy tissues nearby. There is no need for anaesthesia, incisions and hospitalisation. Most women are able to return their normal daily routine within one to two days..." said Prof David A Stringer, Head of Department of Diagnostic Imaging of KKH.

As he delves into the intricacies of how the radiation system works, he recalls how his latest patient went shopping merely a day after she underwent the procedure. Dr Stringer informed that the procedure is done on an outpatient basis and woman can get back to their normal routine in two days. Moreover the 4 hour procedure is simple and leaves no scar behind. "It is speedy recovery without much pain. The MRI enables us to monitor the temperature of treatment at every second. Thus patients can control the sonication or heat which is given for about 20 seconds at a time", said Dr Stringer.

**Suitable candidates**

- Family completed
- Dark (not bright) fibroids on T2
- Enhancing on T1

**Benefits**

- Outpatient procedure i.e. no hospital admission
- Replaces surgery
- No radiation
- Next day return to normal activity
- Significant symptom relief in 80 percent

Woman who are keen on the new procedure should consult with their doctors for assessment to ascertain their suitability for the procedure.

This correspondent has recently been to Singapore to attend Hospital Management 2006 conference. During the time, he visited some hospitals of Singapore on a tour organised by the Singapore Medicine.

### HORMONAL AND AESTHETIC APPROACH

## Anti-aging therapy to improve quality of life

DR YVONNE GOH

Anti-aging treatment is aimed at rejuvenation inside out the hormonal treatment for suitable candidates takes care of individuals experiencing menopause (when a woman stops menstruating and can no longer bear children) and andropause (the result of low testosterone throughout the body), aesthetic treatments (for enhancing and rejuvenating aging skin) takes care of aging effects on the skin.

increased lean muscle mass  
 • increase in bone density  
 • less mood swings, less grumpy  
 • increased skin thickness  
 • better exercise tolerance  
 • more energetic  
 • improved mental sharpness  
 • less vaginal dryness  
 • improved sexual function

Heat energy delivered to the deeper layers of the skin causes collagen production and restructuring, resulting in tighter, firmer and smoother skin. It can also result in decrease in pore size. They are non-ablative which means non-invasive and do not breach the skin's surface - therefore no downtime, safer and less complications. One can have this procedure done during lunch hour and go back to work immediately without requiring time off for recovery.

This is not to halt aging, but to make the transition smoother. It does not just extends life span, but improves quality of life (chronic disease and disability-free life). Prevention is the key to looking and feeling young.

Feeling good internally must be matched by looking good externally. Aesthetic treatments (surgical or non-invasive) has been accepted by both the medical profession and the public. It improves self esteem and confidence through much improved body image.

Of course, there are certain cases when plastic surgery is required e.g. in cases with higher degrees of body fat when effective fat reduction is only achievable by liposuction; severe skin sagging, when a facelift is more effective. It is best to consult a doctor to determine which treatment is most suitable for you.

On top of a healthy lifestyle, medical intervention can serve to further delay the signs and symptoms of aging. The 3 main hormones used are: Estrogen (for women), testosterone (for men) and growth hormone. These have been used for anti-aging treatment for a long time and has established/proven benefits for anti-aging and improving quality of life after much research and trials done over the years. There are different modes of administering hormonal treatment: oral (in the form of tablets), injections, implants (for slow and sustained release over a prolonged time) and creams/gels.

It includes a good prescribed skin care (Cosmeceuticals), chemical peels, Botox, injectable fillers, microdermabrasion, IPL, skin rejuvenation - with radiofrequency or laser, carboxytherapy/mesotherapy for fat/cellulite reduction etc.

An effective skin rejuvenation programme combines medical grade skin care together with single or combination of aesthetic treatments. These can reduce wrinkles, pigmentation that comes with aging skin, replace volume and moisture in the skin that time has taken away, enhance and augment certain features. One of the most popular cosmetic procedures in the market right now is what we call the 'non-surgical facelift'. It is skin rejuvenation aimed at tightening and improving skin's elasticity and texture by the use of lasers or radiofrequency.

It is important to consult a qualified anti-aging physician who will assess if you are suitable for such hormonal treatments and to determine which method of administration and dosage best suits you. After your treatment, you will be followed up by your doctor periodically.

Results after hormonal treatment

It means reduction in the signs and symptoms of aging that include:

- decreased fat deposition,

# Health & fitness club to curb your extra pound

STAR HEALTH REPORT

Mrs Roy\* works in an international company. She has to do lots of works a day. But all those are mainly desk jobs. Moreover, it is very difficult for her to do heavy exercise at home or spend much time outside for physical exercise. As a result, day by day this otherwise healthy woman is getting fat and now she is worried about her increasing health. This is a very common scenario of many of us.

Obesity is a common health problem in the urban life now-a-days. Some usual factors like the rapidly growing fast-food culture, sedentary life style, less movements etc. are contributing to the over-nutrition and loss of physical fitness. Many of these fat-fellows have intense desire to curb their extra pounds and live a healthy life. But after a busy daily routine, they have very little scopes to arrange time for maintaining the physical fitness by free-hand exercise, jogging, yoga and so on.

For these people, different health and fitness centres in the

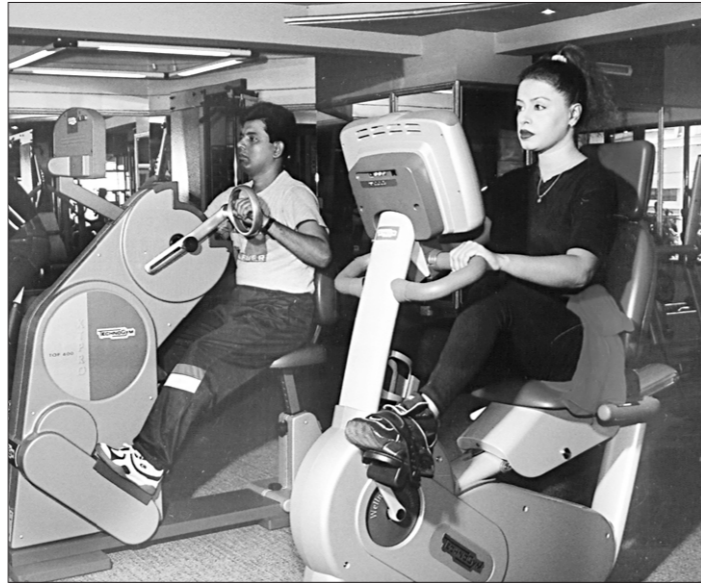
town have come into solving the problem. People can spend time after their office.

Now Mrs Roy\* stays few hours at Ratan's Health Club after her office to remain physically fit. She describes how the health club is helping her in getting a physically fit body. She says her feelings that the club eventually turns her stress into enjoyment and entertainment after a long stressful day in her office.

Ratan's Health Club is supported by skilled nutritionists and instructors and equipped with ultra-modern gym facilities. "It is the most distinguished extraordinary gymnasium in the city equipped with Precor from the USA and international Olympic-standard Technogym from Italy, which have been developed through years of research according to the local demand", - says Dr Syed Tamijul Ahsan Ratan, Managing Director of the health club.

Other facilities available in the health club are steam bath, Jacuzzi, physiotherapy, aerobics, yoga, dance, juice corner, saloon and dental unit.

Steam bath helps to reduce



extra fat from body by sweating. It also helps one overcoming stress and making free from muscular tension.

Jacuzzi, a relaxed and enjoyable arrangement of water massage, known as hydro/water therapy is very useful for stimulation of nerves and relief from inner pain.

Aerobics, a long-term moderate-intensive exercise helps one to keep fit through proper guidelines.

At the health club, physiotherapy is performed by highly professional physiotherapist with most advanced and sophisticated equipment. People suffering from various diseases can get benefit

from the physiotherapy of the health club.

Nutritionists provide guidelines to the members about their diet and nutrition.

Members can choose different time-table according to their convenience. In addition, the club has an exclusive ladies' hour from 10am-1pm. There are different offers of membership according to both timing and payment method considering the convenience of different groups of people.

Ratan's Health Club has also collaboration with Bithi's herbal for skin therapy of its members.

Mrs Roy\* expressed that she is feeling physically fit after joining the club. People who have serious health hazards due to obesity, overweight can take intensive course to curb their extra pound quickly.

There are several health clubs in the city to enjoy these facilities. One can easily compare these clubs and choose his/her right health club to keep physically active and fit.

\* First name disguised to protect identity.

### Upcoming Events

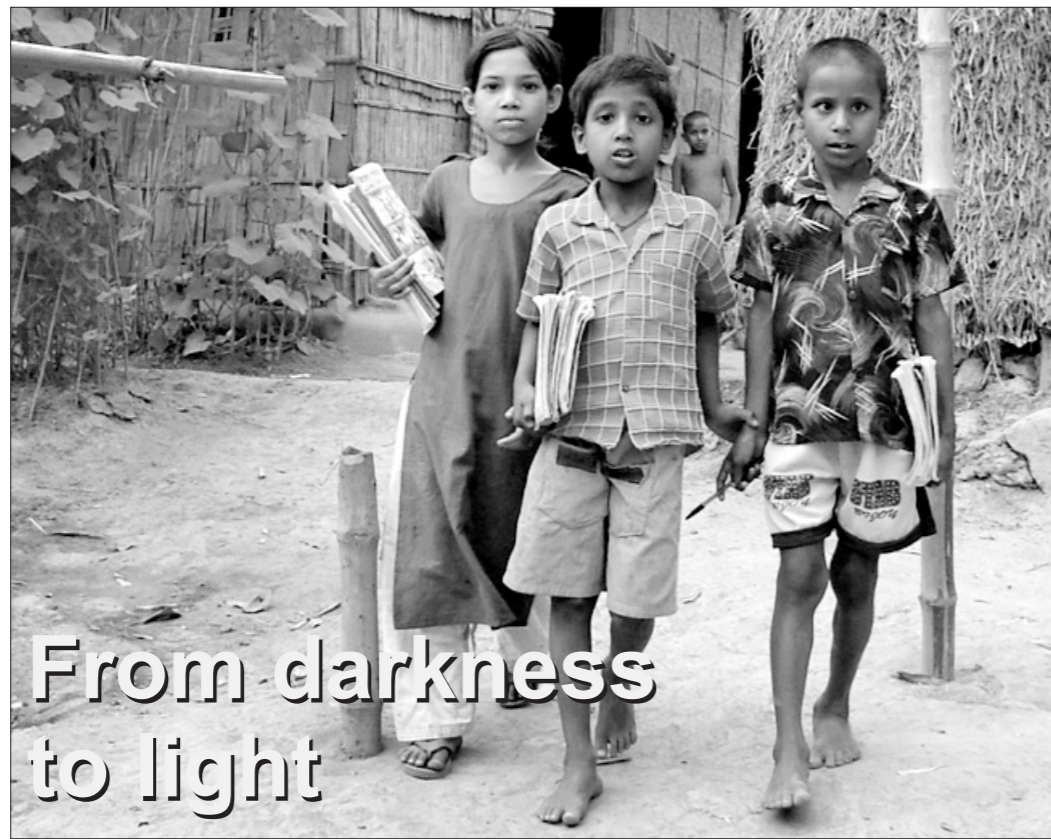
October 10, 2006

## World Mental Health Day

### Building awareness - reducing risk

World Mental Health Day raises public awareness about mental health issues. This year's World Mental Health Day will focus on suicide as a leading cause of premature and preventable death. The theme is "Building Awareness - Reducing Risk: Mental Illness and Suicide" as suicide is often a consequence of failing to diagnose and treat serious mental illness.

The Day is an initiative of the World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH), and this year, it is jointly supported by the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) in collaboration with other NGOs and co-sponsored by WHO.



From darkness to light

Ten-year-old Nizam Uddin (in the middle and inset) from Jhagror Char village in Bhairab upazilla of Kishorganj district, was born with congenital cataract in his both eyes. Unable to see, he could not attend school with his brothers and sisters and was afraid to leave the house alone. His parents could not afford the operation to restore his sight which costs Tk 10 thousand. One day Nizam's father came to know from a village school teacher that Child Sight Foundation's (CSF) partner hospitals could provide the operation free of cost. Since having his cataract operation Nizam's life has been changed a lot. Now he is happy moving around and spends free time playing with friends that he could not do ever before. Now he has been very curious for study. He wants to be a teacher and his hobby is to teach children and to enlighten the light of education among illiterate.

October 12, 2006

## World Sight Day

### Low vision and refractive error

World Sight Day is an annual event that focuses attention on the global problem of blindness and visual impairment.

It aims to raise public awareness around the world about blindness and visual impairment, and to garner support and commitment in ensuring the right to sight for all.

The theme of this year's event, low vision and refractive error, draws attention to the hundreds of millions of people who are functionally blind simply because they need spectacles.

Refractive error can be simply diagnosed, measured and corrected; yet many people do not have access to these basic services. The World Health Organization is working with its partners to provide affordable optical correction to people in need, especially those in poor areas with limited eye care services.

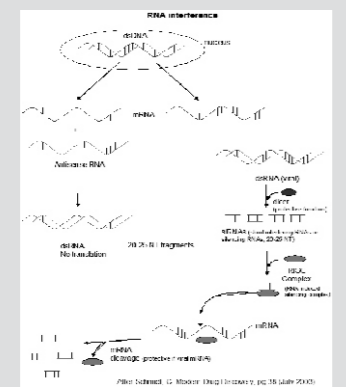
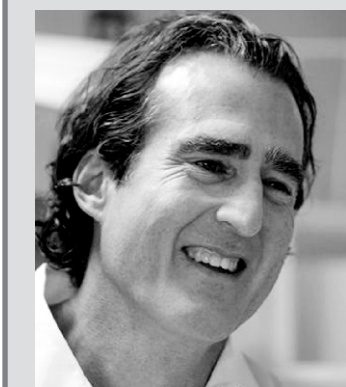
There are about 1.5 million blind children worldwide, and this number appears to be growing. Approximately 500,000 children become blind every year - one every minute. About half of them die within one or two years of becoming blind. Approximately one third of the total economic cost of blindness is thought to be due to childhood blindness. Unlike adults, blind children

have a lifetime of blindness ahead, which affects their opportunities for education, employment, and earning. Blindness starts early in life adversely affects psychomotor, social, and emotional development. And blind children have a higher death rate than their sighted counterparts.

A national study by International Centre for Eye Health, UK and Child Sight Foundation revealed that around 40,000 children are blind in Bangladesh. Two thirds of blind children have lost their sight because of conditions that could either have been prevented or they have conditions where surgery could restore sight. Other studies suggest that there are almost 10,000 children with some degree of visual impairment in every million population, and most of them just need glasses to be able to see clearly again.

The World Sight Day provides an opportunity to become more aware and committed for our children to ensure their right to sight.

Compiled by Md Rajib Hossain



Nobel laureate in Medicine for 2006 Andrew Fire (right) and Craig Mello (left). The RNA interference i.e. gene silencing mechanism (middle).

## Nobel for "gene silencing"

REUTERS, Stockholm

Americans Andrew Fire and Craig Mello won the 2006 Nobel prize for medicine for their discovery of how to switch off genes, a potential road to new treatments for diseases from AIDS to blindness and cancer.

Fire, 47, and Mello, 45, are among the youngest in recent history to win the prize of 10 million Swedish crowns (\$1.37 million). Their work, which was published only in 1998, also received remarkably swift recognition.

Through experiments with worms, the two showed that a double strand of ribonucleic acid, or RNA - the genetic messenger of the cell - can

"silence" targeted genes in a process known as RNA interference (RNAi). RNAi has grown quickly into a hot area of research for pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, who see it as a promising new way to tackle a range of conditions.

The discoveries may lead to methods to stop gene expression in diseases such as cancer, slowing tumor growth. "The discovery is already being used in clinical trials for viral diseases, for eye diseases, for cardiovascular metabolic diseases," Bertil Fredholm, a member of the prize-giving Nobel Assembly of Stockholm's Karolinska Institute, said.

"But even more importantly, it is being used in every drug

industry as a fundamental research tool," he added, saying RNAi has "invaded" laboratories worldwide.

Fire earned his PhD in biology in 1983 at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and is now a professor of pathology and genetics at Stanford University School of Medicine. Mello has a Harvard doctorate and is a professor of molecular medicine at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

The Massachusetts school said a number of companies - Novartis AG, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Monsanto Co., GlaxoSmithKline and Pfizer - had licensed RNAi for their research.