

*6/29 Ms. Nambu  
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**Doing what comes naturally at Natural Research Unit at Hadassah Medical Center**

JERUSALEM – Its researchers are working at a sophisticated high-tech hospital which routinely transplants hearts, lungs and livers, and is known for its teaching and research worldwide. They are experimenting with therapeutic honey in order to heal human burns and ulcers. They're hoping to unclog arteries in elderly legs using an ancient Tibetan plant recipe. Planned for the future are investigations into ginger for reducing nausea after chemotherapy, a Chinese herbal formula for curing eczema and ginkgo for treating aging and memory loss. Also in the works is a comprehensive data base of medicinal plants native to the Middle East.

"The scientific investigation of natural medicines is becoming increasingly important," says Dr. Sarah Sallon, who heads Hadassah-Hebrew University Medical Center's year-old Natural Medicine Research Unit. "What makes us unusual is our multi-disciplinary approach. Botanists, agriculturists, medicinal plant experts and statisticians work alongside pharmacologists and clinicians."

Dr. Sallon's interest in traditional medicine dates from the early 1980s when she worked in India as a pediatrician. Her curiosity led her to the Tibetan Medicine School in Daramsalha, located in the foothills of the Indian Himalayas, where the 2,000-year-old tradition of Tibetan medicine is taught and practiced by Tibetan physicians.

"I found that the traditional Tibetan approach to healing that we are researching at Hadassah often seems to reach similar conclusions to Western medicine, albeit along very different routes," says Dr. Sallon. "For example, we attribute atherosclerosis to many factors, including smoking, obesity and elevated cholesterol. The Tibetans call it 'a condition resulting from excess heat energy,' and point to a surfeit of red meat, fats and alcohol as contributing causes."

One traditional Tibetan remedy which Dr. Sallon's Unit is studying both in the laboratory and in a clinical trial involving 80 elderly patients with peripheral atherosclerosis is a compound comprised of 22 plants. Funded by the Swiss company Padma which manufactures the compound, their preliminary work has indicated that its ingredients, including marigold, licorice, Iceland moss, knotgrass, clove, china-berry, sorrel, columbine and ginger lily may work together to produce a powerful antioxidant effect inhibiting the molecules

known as free radicals, which may also contribute to other conditions, such as aging, tissue injury and inflammation.

A local Israeli group is behind another of the Unit's projects. Members of a Galilee kibbutz who produce honey commercially have been feeding bees by a new technique based on medicinal plant extracts.

"It's claimed that bees fed on these plants produce honey with specific medicinal qualities," says Dr. Sallon. "There have been no clinical trials as yet, but we have interesting anecdotal and laboratory evidence that one of the products – a honey-based ointment – seems to be very effective in healing skin-ulcers and burns."

The Unit is also involved in educating and informing the public and health care professionals about the value of both natural products and other complementary therapies. On the drawing board are a number of workshops sponsored in conjunction with several universities in Canada and the United States to bring together physicians for an intensive, short course of lectures, seminars and hands-on techniques.

One of the more ambitious projects on the Unit's agenda is the Middle Eastern Medicinal Plant Project (MEMPP): the compiling of an extensive database of all the region's medicinal plants.

**Israeli shop owner cancels plans to auction off Holocaust memorabilia**

JERUSALEM, (JTA) – A Tel Aviv shop owner has canceled plans to auction off Holocaust memorabilia – including a bar of soap said to have been made from Jewish remains – after news of the auction set off a wave of disgust in the country.

Menashe Meridack, owner of the Zodiac Stamp Shop, said that he had canceled the planned auction in the wake of the public outcry. He also said he had returned the soap to its original owner, the son of a former inmate of the Buchenwald death camp.

"I run two auctions a year, and always have some things from the Holocaust on sale," he said. "I don't buy these things. People bring me stuff, like yellow patches, badges, Nazi documents, and I put them up for sale."

"The soap entered the catalog by mistake. I was not aware of the sensitivity that surrounded the soap. When I heard it reported on the news, I returned the soap and all other Holocaust items to their owners," said Meridack.

The auction catalogue of the Zodiac Stamp Shop, which specializes mainly in international postage stamps, was stocked with Holocaust memorabilia, including the yellow Stars of David the Nazis forced Jews to wear, Nazi deportation orders and death certificates stamped with swastikas. The soap had a starting price of \$300.

Meridack had originally planned to hold the auction April 25 – two days before Israel marks Holocaust Remembrance Day.

Meridack said the person who had sold him the soap, Moshe Yahalom, had offered the item for auction because he had fallen on hard times.

Yahalom, appearing on Israel Television, said he was destitute, having just been released from prison after serving a jail sentence for rape and indecent acts.

According to Yahalom, the charges against him were trumped up, and he had just wanted the money from the sale of the soap to enable him to leave the country.

News of the auction elicited an outcry of protest from Holocaust survivors, politicians and religious leaders, including Chief Ashkenazi Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau, a survivor of Buchenwald.

The controversial bar of soap has been pictured on the front pages of Israeli newspapers and was featured on television and radio reports.

Tel Aviv Mayor Roni Milo vowed to stop the auction, by force if necessary.

**With journalists watching, Kach leader surrenders**

JERUSALEM (JTA) – The leader of the illegal Jewish extremist Kach movement surrendered to police in the West Bank town of Hebron after inviting journalists to watch the event.

Baruch Marzel, who arranged the surrender, met police outside the Tomb of the Patriarchs. Police had been searching for Marzel for several days for questioning, Israel Radio said.

Marzel was in violation of an Israel Defense Force order that confined him to his home in the Jewish enclave in Hebron. Marzel has previously led police on similar searches, only giving himself up after alerting the media.

The Israeli government declared the Kach movement illegal after the February 1994 massacre at the Tomb of the Patriarchs. Baruch Goldstein, the Jewish settler who carried out the attack, once belonged to Kach.

After the massacre, in which 29 Muslims were killed, Israel invoked emergency defense regulations, enabling it to hold Marzel and other Jewish militants without trial for several months.

**Wolf Prize in physics to U of C prof**



JERUSALEM – PROFESSOR YOICHIRO NAMBU OF THE University of Chicago received the 1994-95 Wolf Prize in Physics from the President of Israel, Ezer Weizman, in ceremonies at the Knesset building in Jerusalem for his contribution to elementary particle theory. Born and educated in Tokyo, Professor Nambu has been associated with the University of Chicago for almost 40 years, and is Professor Emeritus of its Enrico Fermi Institute. He shares the \$100,000 Israel-based Wolf Foundation Prize with Vitaly L. Ginzburg of the Lebedev Physical Institute, Moscow. (Left to right) Micha Goldman, Deputy Minister of Education, Speaker of the Knesset, Shevach Weiss.