

NEWS UP-DATE

March 2008

TAXI LINK

Shakeel

07866 564404

Car / Minibuses & Wheelchair Accessible
"Providing Freedom to Travel"
Friendly Reliable Service



ACCESSIBLE HOLIDAYS

BOND HOTEL

120 Bond Street, Blackpool, FY4 1HG
Tel: 01253 341218

Award winning Specialist Hotel & Caravans for Disabled People

65 en suite rooms, easy access for wheelchairs, lifts to all floors, car park, overhead tracking hoist, electric hoists, electric beds, cot sides, commodes, modern spacious bar and restaurant with specialist diet chef, residential licence, live cabaret show every night, day.

e:mail reception@bondhotel.co.uk
Web: www.bondhotel.co.uk

HIDELOW HOUSE COTTAGES

Near Malvern, Worcestershire

6 Luxury Holiday Cottages - 2 Fully Wheelchair Accessible

**Please contact:
Pauline or Stuart Diplock
Tel: 01886 884547**

Email: teg@hidelow.co.uk www.hidelow.co.uk
www.disabledholidaysmalvern.co.uk

The Tranquil Otter

An idyllic and peaceful Cumbria beauty spot. Lux lodges with sauna and whirlpool bath/hot-tub, log burner. All Lakeside position with picture book views. Outstanding with w/c accessible lodges, paths, shops etc. Wheely boat!

P.N. 01228 576661
www.thetranquilotter.co.uk

GAER COTTAGES

High Quality 5 Star Self Catering Accommodation for ALL the family; with the emphasis on providing SPECIAL facilities for the disabled visitor.

9 traditional scone cottages nestling in beautiful, tranquil, unspoilt countryside.

The cottages, 6 of which are single storey and have easy access from the car park, can accommodate from 3-9 guests.

The indoor pool has an Oxford dipper hoist.

All linen and heating is provided-

For a brochure, price list or further details, contact:

Jeff & Sue Rice, Gaer Cottages, Cribyn, Lampeter, Cardiganshire, SA4& 112, Tel/Fax: 01570 470275

Website: www.selfcateringwales.co.uk
E-mail: gaer@bigfoot.com

New Drug Protects Nerve Cells From Damage In Mice

Individuals with multiple sclerosis develop progressive neurological disability that is thought to be caused by degradation of nerve cells. A new study has characterised an agent that protected nerve cells from damage in culture and markedly reduced disease progression in a mouse model of MS.

The authors of the study therefore suggested that agents similar to the one they characterised might provide a new approach to treating individuals with MS and other neurodegenerative disorders.

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a chronic inflammatory disease of the brain and spinal cord. Individuals with MS develop progressive neurological disability, and this is thought to be caused by degradation of the nerve cells. It is therefore hoped that treatments that protect nerve cells might help individuals with the progressive form of MS.

Data to support this hypothesis has now been generated using a chronic progressive EAE mouse model of MS by Howard Weiner and colleagues at the Brigham and Women's Hospital, Harvard Medical School, Boston.

In the study, treatment of mice after the onset of disease with a water-soluble agent known as ABS-75, which has antioxidant properties and blocks the stimulation of the subset of nerve cells that express the NMDA receptor, markedly reduced disease progression.

This beneficial effect was associated with decreased nerve cell degradation, and a similar protective effect was observed for ABS-75 when it was added to cultured nerve cells exposed to damaging reagents. These data led the authors to suggest that agents similar to ABS-75 might provide a new approach to treating individuals with MS and other neurodegenerative disorders.

Journal reference: *Reversal of axonal loss and disability in a mouse model of progressive multiple sclerosis. Journal of Clinical Investigation. March 12, 2008.*

Can drinking worm eggs treat Multiple Sclerosis

Some UW Hospital patients will soon test an unusual treatment: They'll drink a cocktail of worm eggs, which will hatch inside their bodies.

Doctors say the low-grade infection of worms, harvested from pigs, can help regulate faulty immune systems. The patients have multiple sclerosis, in which the immune system attacks nerve cells.

"The yuck factor is hard to get over," acknowledged Dr. John Fleming, the UW Hospital neurologist who plans to launch a study of worm therapy next month. *"But the idea has scientific merit."*

Patients with other conditions, such as irritable bowel syndrome, have tried worm therapy elsewhere. It has eased symptoms without causing known side effects.

Many scientists believe the prevalence of such autoimmune conditions — including multiple sclerosis, allergies, asthma and a form of diabetes — is partly explained by a *"hygiene hypothesis."*

Sanitary environments in developed countries have led to more of the diseases, the theory goes, because people's immune systems aren't properly trained by exposure to germs and parasites.

The worm therapy offers a crash course of such training, Fleming said. *"It stimulates the immune system in a good way."*

He said the concept is similar to eating yogurt, which contains helpful bacteria that regulate digestion.

In the UW-Madison study, five patients with multiple sclerosis will sip a sports drink-like liquid every two weeks for three months. Each cup will contain 2,500 eggs of the whipworm, a tiny organism that commonly lives in humans and animals.

Though the human whipworm rarely causes illness, the study uses a pig version that is benign in people, Fleming said.

The eggs hatch into larvae, the size of an eyelash, that stick to the inside of the intestine. In killing the larvae, the body unleashes an extra dose of regulatory T cells, which dampen overactive immune cells.

Existing multiple sclerosis treatments, all of them injections, also try to block overactive immune cells.

But with the worm therapy, *"instead of knocking down the bad parts of the immune system, we're pushing up the good parts,"* Fleming said.

He is buying the egg-containing liquid from Ovamed, a German company that harvests the eggs from pigs.

Multiple sclerosis can cause numbness, paralysis, blindness and other symptoms. Most patients have a ***"relapsing-remitting"*** form, in which flare-ups are followed by recovery periods.

Fleming will check to see if the worm therapy reduces the frequency or severity of flare-ups.

Patients will also undergo monthly MRI scans to see if fewer lesions develop in the brain and spinal cord, where the disease destroys nerve cells.

If the study is successful, 15 patients will be enrolled in a follow-up trial for a year. Then a larger study might be launched comparing worm therapy with a placebo, or fake treatment.

Worm therapy is a promising alternative treatment for the 400,000 Americans with multiple sclerosis, said Dr. John Richert. He is vice president for research and clinical programs at the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, which is funding Fleming's study.

"We need to push for the development of new and safe medications," Richert said. *"This is a direction that has a strong chance of bearing fruit."*

Fleming admits he was skeptical when he first heard of worm therapy.

It was carried out a few years ago by Joel Weinstock of the University of Iowa, who is now at Tufts University in Boston.

Zsuzsanna Fabry, a pathologist who worked with Weinstock in Iowa, is now at UW-Madison. She told Fleming of Weinstock's research, which had positive results in patients with irritable bowel syndrome.

Fleming figured the same approach could work in multiple sclerosis.

A study in Argentina backed up that hunch. It compared a dozen multiple sclerosis patients who were naturally infected with a similar worm with a dozen worm-free patients.

Over four years, those with the worms had 90 percent fewer flare-ups and brain lesions.

"This idea seems outrageous at first," Fleming said. *"But many good, new ideas do."*

Source: madison.com © 2008 Capital Newspapers (07/03/08)

DISCLAIMER

Articles in this Bulletin are meant for the sole purpose of information only and do not necessarily reflect the views of the committee.

MEMBERS COMPETITION

A £5 prize will be given to the member whose entry has the most correct answers. Even if you can't answer all the questions, send in those you have answered – you could still win!

USING ONE OF THE INITIAL LETTERS FROM EACH ANSWER WILL GIVE YOU THE NAME OF A FAMOUS LAKE

- 1/ Which member of the Wombles is named after a town on the Isle of Mull?
- 2/ In which sport is the Stanley Cup played for?
- 3/ Which insect has both a King and Queen?
- 4/ Which country used to be called Mesopotamia?
- 5/ What is the name of a young swan?
- 6/ Which desert is the 3rd largest in the world?
- 7/ Of which country is Zagreb the capital?
- 8/ Which range of mountains straddle Northern Morocco and Algeria

Name:

Address:

Send Completed Forms To:
Mr D Henderson
74 Windermere Road
Stockton-on-Tees
TS18 4LY

All entries to be received by the next social. The winner will be drawn from entries received with the highest number of correct answers.

Answers to last quiz:

1/ Simon Wiesenthal 2/ The Italian Job 3/ Nassau 4/ Nepal 5/ India 6/ Nick Parks
7/ Eland 8/ Boy George **LAKE WINNIPEG**