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TRACKING TRENDS & PERFORMANCE IN BASIC RESEARCH

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2008 : July 2008 - Fast Moving Fronts : Anna Wu

FAST MOVING FRONTS - 2008

July 2008



Anna Wu talks with *ScienceWatch.com* and answers a few questions about this month's Fast Moving Front in the field of Agricultural Sciences.


Article: Adolescent and adult soy intake and risk of breast cancer in Asian-Americans

Authors: Wu, AH;Wan, P;Hankin, J;Tseng, CC;Yu, MC;Pike, MC

Journal: CARCINOGENESIS, 23 (9): 1491-1496 SEP 2002

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SW: Why do you think your paper is highly cited?

Breast cancer is the commonest cancer in US women and a leading cause of cancer incidence in women worldwide. Thus, identification of lifestyle-related risk or protective factors that are modifiable is of immense public health significance.

SW: Does it describe a new discovery, methodology, or synthesis of knowledge?

Our paper describes a new discovery. Specifically, our study presents one of the first sets of human data in support of soy intake as a chemopreventive food for breast cancer. In addition, our results suggest that timing of soy intake may be important.

SW: Would you summarize the significance of your paper in layman's terms?

US women are at high risk for breast cancer. Our study suggests that inclusion of soy food products in the diet, especially if begun in early life, may meaningfully reduce the woman's lifetime risk of breast cancer.

SW: How did you become involved in this research and were there any particular problems encountered along the way?

Breast cancer incidence rates in Asia are historically one-sixth of the rates in US whites. However, as Asians migrate to the US, our breast cancer rates increase steadily and they now approach the rates in US whites. My research interest is to understand the underlying reasons for the historically low incidence in Asia and the increasing rates with migration to the West.

In particular, I have been interested in the role of diet in cancer causation since the beginning of my cancer epidemiologic research career. My Asian heritage (and

"Our ultimate goal is to definitively elucidate the possible causal role of soy intake in breast

therefore, familiarity with its cultures and diet) puts me in an especially advantageous position in examining possible protective factors in the Asian diet that may have contributed to the lower rates of breast cancer among Asian women.

cancer
protection
and
survival."

SW: Where do you see your research leading in the future?


Our ultimate goal is to definitively elucidate the possible causal role of soy intake in breast cancer protection and survival.

SW: Do you foresee any social or political implications for your research?

As stated above, there are immense public health implications to our research finding. To the extent that social and political events impact on public health, I would agree that our research has social and political implications.

Keywords: soy intake, breast cancer, Asian diet, Asian women, chemopreventive food, soy food products.



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