PROGRAM & ABSTRACT

National Symposium and Workshop on Anti-Aging Medicine (NASWAAM)

Theme: The Era of Evidence-Based Anti-Aging Medicine

Indonesian Award on Anti-Aging Medicine

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EVIDENCE-BASED ANTI-AGING MEDICINE

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Anti-Aging Medicine has been growing very fast. Therefore many physicians and medical-related scientists give much attention to this field. For physicians this is a new chance to update their knowledge and how to apply in medical practice.

Unfortunately, many physicians apply Anti-Aging Medicine without proper scientific basis. Therefore many physicians practice what they mention as Anti-Aging Medicine, but it is not evidence-based, even it is malpractice.

On the other side there are many people and companies misuse this new chance for their profit. They use attractive fraudulent advertisements to sell products in the name of Anti-Aging Medicine. Even some well-known companies involved in fraud scams. These products are not scientific base, many of them are only based on animal study, do not pass the clinical trial. However, they use many doctors to sell the products even in the name of MLM. The following are examples of non evidence-based Anti-Aging Medicine

Detoxification

Many quacks and product marketers, including doctors tell people they have accumulated toxins and need "detoxification." They sell colon cleanser as powders to which water is added before use.
The ingredients vary from one product to another, but the basic ingredients include fiber (e.g. psyllium, flaxseed, bentonite) and laxatives such as cascara and magnesium oxide. Their misinformation are as follows:

1. toxin damage the body in an insidious and cumulative way. Once the detoxification system becomes overloaded, toxic metabolites accumulate, and sensitivity to other chemicals, some of which are not normally toxic, becomes progressively greater. This accumulation of toxins results in abnormal metabolic processes.

2. intestinal sluggishness causes intestinal contents to putrefy, toxins are absorbed, and results in chronic poisoning of the body.

3. fecal material collects on the lining of the intestine and causes trouble. Therefore it must be removed by fasting, laxatives, colonic irrigation, special diets, and/or various herbs or food supplements that "cleanse" the body.

However, intestinal surgery showed: fecal material does not stick to the intestinal lining. No such "toxins" have ever been found, and individuals in good health can vary greatly in bowel habits. The well-known Mayo Clinic stated: detox diets have no proven scientific benefits. Human bodies naturally remove toxins from things ingested, and there is no need to add some sort of cleansing products to the diets to remove toxins.

**Product to stop telomeres shortening**

A product, TA-65, claims to stop shortening of telomeres. It means that this product can stop aging process. TA-65 is produced at very low levels in the astragalus plant but it is purified and concentrated, which is thought to "turn on" the enzyme telomerase (hTERT) that acts to maintain or lengthen telomeres. hTERT is usually
"off" in adult cells except in immune, egg and sperm cells, and in malignant cancer-forming cells.

However, there is a big problem in the research of telomere, that there is no suitable model organism for testing. Animals do not age through telomere shortening in the same way that humans do, even mice or monkeys do not have same telomere aging system. The best system to ultimately test is going to be the human.

Treatments of obesity with gonadotropin and thyroid

Some doctors directly treat obesity with hormone: Gonadotrophin (HCG), thyroid This is not evidence-based practice. Even this is considered as malpractice. The use of hormone in normal level will result in serious problems. Probably they got misinformation about the use of hormone in obesity.

Since 1975, the US FDA has required labeling and advertising of HCG: “HCG has not been demonstrated to be effective adjunctive therapy in the treatment of obesity. There is no substantial evidence that it increases weight loss beyond that resulting from caloric restriction, that it causes a more attractive or "normal" distribution of fat, or that it decreases the hunger and discomfort associated with calorie-restricted diets”.

A meta-analysis stated there is no scientific evidence that HCG is effective in the treatment of obesity; it does not bring about weight-loss of fat-redistribution, nor does it reduce hunger or induce a feeling of well-being (Lijesen et al., 1995).

In 2011, the FDA and FTC warned six companies that it is illegal to market over the counter HCG products that are labeled as "homeopathic" for weight loss.
Thyroid hormones have been inappropriately and frequently used in attempts to induce weight loss in obese euthyroid subjects, but there is no indication for their administration to control body weight.

Long-term treatment with thyroid hormones does not significantly improve weight loss in obese subjects without thyroid dysfunction and, on the contrary, will entail a risk of adverse effects. But it is indication in obese patient caused by hypothyroidism (Biondi, 2013).

Stem cell in capsule and apple stem cell

Many people including doctors are recruited and involved in MLM business to sell a product called stem cell from deer in the capsule, and apple stem cell. It is easy to conclude that this is a fraud. Stem cells are taken from human organ tissue or at least from animal, for example from bone marrow, blood, and adipose tissue. After passing a series of process from the organ tissue, stem cells are collected and ready to use by injection. Stem cells can not be dried to get its powder form to collect in capsule.

In 2013, Philippines FDA warned public against buying and using unregistered Bio Stem Plus. There are no scientific and clinical studies that would support or back up its health and therapeutic claims the product was being promoted supposedly as a “natural stem cell nutrition” that increases adult stem cell circulation, repairs damaged tissues, decreases the effects of aging, aids in “up to 70 known human conditions” and cures high blood, vertigo and back pain.

Dietary supplements

Many dietary supplements made in USA are health fraud. In 2014 at least 48 products claimed as dietary supplements have been recalled as health fraud. The most reason is they contain unapproved
drug. Other reasons are concerns about authenticity of product and bacterial contamination.

Evidence-based

As a new medical field, Anti-Aging Medicine should be applied to the patients based on scientific evidences. All practices in Anti-Aging Medicine should be based on update research evidences, patients’ data, and clinical expertise of the doctor. This is called as evidence-based Anti-Aging Medicine.

However, it is easy to find practices in Anti-Aging Medicine that are not evidence-based. Some medical devices related to Anti-Aging Medicine are used in daily practice. But those devices do not have scientific evidences. Many doctors presume FDA approves all medical devices made in USA. In fact, US FDA uses a risk-based, tiered approach for regulating medical devices. FDA classifies devices according to risk. Only the highest-risk devices, such as mechanical heart valves and implantable infusion pumps, require FDA approval before marketing.

The following products do not need approval by US FDA: compounded drugs, cosmetics, medical foods, infant formula, dietary supplements, the food label including nutrition facts, structure-function claims on dietary supplements and other foods. This means that FDA has not verified their safety and effectiveness.

Therefore on the original package of supplements produced in US, there is always attached a note as follows: “These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. These products are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.”

FDA only approves new drugs and biologics, additives in food for people, drugs and additives in food for animals, color additives
used in FDA-regulated products. It means there is no guarantee that treatment with supplements is evidence-based practice.

The key is all doctors should understand which products related to Anti-Aging Medicine that need or do not need FDA approval. If the products do not need FDA approval, there is no guarantee of its safety and efficacy.

Conclusions

Anti-Aging Medicine should be understood and practiced as an evidence-based medicine. Doctors should be aware and understand that many medical devices and health products do not need FDA approval. Therefore in practicing Anti-Aging Medicine doctors should only base on update research evidences, patients’ data, and clinical expertise in Anti-Aging Medicine.

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