



Editorial

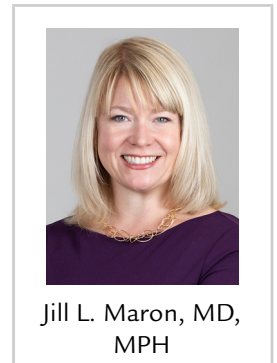
Incorporating Nature's Therapies for Improved Health Outcomes

Clinical Therapeutics reports not only on novel drugs and diagnostics but also on the economic value and health impact of these emerging therapies. The editorial team strives to bring our readership the most up-to-date treatment strategies across a breadth of medical disciplines each month. Admittedly, however, we have struggled as to how to best incorporate alternative therapies into our manuscript portfolio. We recognize that individual health and wellness are not solely linked to emerging pharmacotherapies but may be achieved through homeopathic remedies and holistic approaches to health. While our journal's focus will remain on traditional treatments, we are committed to evaluating scientifically sound manuscripts from authors reporting on alternate and/or natural therapies.

Toward this aim, *Clinical Therapeutics* is excited to publish 2 manuscripts this month highlighting the use of natural remedies for improved neurologic outcomes across the age spectrum. In a pilot study, Zhang et al¹ randomized patients who had recently experienced a stroke or transient ischemic attack to receive either daily aspirin + placebo or daily aspirin + cinnamon, a long-used Chinese herbal medicine. Cinnamon has been shown to reduce blood levels of lipids, glucose, and inflammatory biomarkers, all risk factors for vascular disease, although its use in at-risk patients is far from standard practice. The primary outcome of the study was recurrent stroke or transient ischemic attack within 90 days of the sentinel event. In an intention-to-treat analysis, the authors found that only 2 patients treated with the combination of aspirin + cinnamon would develop a subsequent stroke, compared with 9 subjects treated with daily aspirin alone. Although additional research must be conducted to both validate findings and further explore risks and benefits associated with daily cinnamon intake, this pilot study lays the foundation for the field to think more broadly about new preventive approaches utilizing ancient remedies.

Complementing this study is a comparative review article analyzing the neuroprotective and brain development effects of maternal and donor breast milk in the preterm population. Performing a cumulative analysis of data from 7 observational studies published in the last decade, Belfort and Inder² found that greater exposure to human breast milk compared with formula during critical developmental windows in the preterm (<37 weeks' gestational age) infant resulted in greater regional brain volumes, less brain injury, and more mature connectivity in cerebral areas. Here too, future research must be conducted to better understand the active neuroprotectants in human milk that allow for improved brain MRI findings, but this study reminds us that the old adage of "Mother Nature knows best" continues to ring true.

Clinical Therapeutics will continue to evolve its topic and focus areas to reflect the emerging trends in the field, inclusive of treatment and preventative and wellness strategies, along with the health economic value of each discipline. We equally look forward to reporting on newly emerging drugs and alternative therapies. Our overall health and wellness are dependent on our ability to consider all well-designed studies with the proper scientific rigor that allows for the analysis of therapies, alone and in combination, to improve health outcomes or prevent disease and associated morbidities altogether.



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REFERENCES

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2. Belfort MB, Inder T. Human milk and preterm infant brain development: a narrative review. *Clin Ther*. 2022;44:612–921.