University of Ottawa and Drexel Scientists Receive "Best of Research" Award; Study Demonstrated Potential MOA of AHCC Mushroom Compound in Promoting Immune Response

Award Presented at the International Congress on Nutrition and Integrative Medicine

(October 1, 2014, Beaverton, OR): Dr. Chantal Matar, Professor, Health Sciences Faculty of the University of Ottawa, and Dr. Barry W. Ritz, Nutrition Sciences Department at Drexel University, received the "Best of Research" award from the Hokkaido Prefecture Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry for a new study presented at the 22nd International Congress on Nutrition and Integrative Medicine held in Sapporo, Japan.

Dr. Matar and Dr. Ritz were recognized for their pioneering research on the mode of action of the mycelial mushroom compound AHCC, an alpha-glucan rich immune modulator.

"Previous studies have demonstrated that AHCC has a significant positive effect on the body's innate immune response," said Professor Matar. (1) "This latest research helped us understand how the anti-inflammatory immune response is initiated at the level of the intestinal epithelium."

"Our results suggest that AHCC may play a role in the orchestration of the immune response and the maintenance of immune homeostasis in part by priming the TLR-2 and TLR-4 gate at the intestinal epithelium," said Dr. Ritz. "AHCC appears to participate in innate immune recognition, which is an important part of first line immune defense."

The study showed that mice fed with AHCC had higher levels of IgA+ immune cells in the intestines and increased sIgA, IL-10 and IFN-y in the intestinal fluid.

Because 70-80% of immune cells reside in the intestine, understanding how active molecules in functional foods interact with innate immune response there may provide important health benefits. (2)

"We were honored to receive the Best of Research Award for our study," said Professor Matar, a featured speaker at this year's ICNIM meeting. "AHCC and other complex food

bioactive compounds offer an exciting new area of research for understanding how the innate immune system interacts with its food environment and how we might capitalize on such advancements to promote human health."

Dr. Matar and Dr. Ritz have collaborated for the past 8 years publishing several research papers on the topic of immunomodulatory bioactive nutrients, including fish proteins, bovine colostrum and now AHCC. (3)

About AHCC

AHCC (Active Hexose Correlated Compound) is an extract of fermented mycelia of Japanese medicinal mushroom which has been clinically shown to strengthen the body's immune system. AHCC is supported by over 20 human clinical studies and by over 40 papers in PubMed-indexed journals. This latest study demonstrates that AHCC supports an effective immune response by stimulating intestinal immunity.

For the past decade, AHCC has been widely used as an ingredient in functional and medical nutrition products including nutritional supplement products. Human and animal studies have shown that AHCC influences the number and activity of Natural Killer (NK) cells, dendritic cells and cytokines, which supports overall immune response. (4)(5)

About the AHCC Research Association

The mission of the AHCC Research Association is to increase public awareness of Active Hexose Correlated Compound (AHCC) in Integrative Medicine, educate consumers and doctors on AHCC's preventative and therapeutic benefits, and support research studies on AHCC. For more information, please visit: www.ahccresearch.org.

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Note to editors: Dr. Matar and Dr. Ritz are available for interviews; photos available.

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