

Yuzurihara Reveals Its Secret: HYALURONIC ACID, “The Molecule of Youth”*

Bill Sardi

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YUZURIHARA GETS WORLDWIDE ATTENTION



Bill Sardi
with a Taro Root

Late in the year 2000, ABC News Prime Time Live sent reporter Connie Chung to a small village about two hours outside of Tokyo. That report drew widespread interest. The report emanated from *Yuzurihara, Japan, known as “the village of long life.”* Of 990 villages and towns surveyed by the World Health Organization in Japan, there were **ten times more people living beyond the age of 85** in Yuzurihara than anywhere in North America. It was so renowned, the emperor of

Japan visited this village. But longevity alone was not what attracted ABC News to Yuzurihara.

YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE ATTRIBUTED TO HYALURONIC ACID*

These aged villagers of Yuzurihara, Japan, had smooth skin, flexible joints, thick hair and few needed reading glasses.* Many older residents of Yuzurihara were still farming their fields into their 80’s. These people defied their calendar age. One female resident of Yuzurihara had **no wrinkles** or age spots at age 90! Dr. Toyosuke Komori, the town doctor, wrote five books about Yuzurihara in the 1970’s and 80’s. **He attributed the youthful aging of these people to a low-iron, sticky vegetable-based diet** which ultimately promotes H.A. levels in the body. These villagers were shorter than other Japanese adults of the same age, which likely means their diet was lacking iron which is a growth factor. Dr. Komori also attributed the youthful appearance of these villagers to a molecule called **Hyaluronic Acid.***

WHY IS H.A. SO IMPORTANT?

About three years ago I began to investigate **Hyaluronic Acid** (H.A.), the water-gelling molecule of the human body. Just 1000 milligrams of pure H.A. can gel 6 quarts of water. When the human body is young, H.A. is abundant, cushioning joints and nerves and filling space in between cells in the connective tissue. **With advancing age, H.A. production by fibroblast cells dissipates**, and humans lose moisture and begin to dry out, the skin wrinkles, the eyes and brain shrink, the joint spaces narrow, cartilage shrinks, the hair thins, and humans begin to look old.

But my earlier trip to Japan was brief and there were so many unanswered questions about the Yuzurihara phenomenon. So I returned to Japan in the summer of 2004 to visit Yuzurihara, this time with a crew of interpreters and cameramen, for an in-depth view.

AN EARLY START

The first morning in Yuzurihara we made a quick stop for photographs at the etched stone monument at the entrance to Yuzurihara, and then we visited the fields where crops were being grown in the middle of summer. Corn, taro root, okra, red onions, tomatoes, cucumbers, melons and potatoes were being grown and harvested. Up to this point there were no surprises. A few people were working in the fields next to their homes on steep slopes where the traditional rice crop could not be grown.



Yuzurihara Villager
farming in the sun

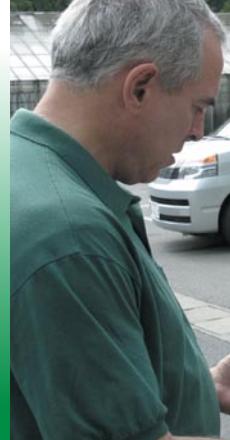
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Villager shows Bill Sardi a freshly picked melon



Bill Sardi in Yuzurihara, Japan



Older Resident w

THE VILLAGE OF LONG LIFE

Yuzurihara has in modern times mostly been an isolated village. As you enter Yuzurihara there is a marker stone, which says “Village of Long Life.” We began to ask people we met about Yuzurihara’s reputation. They told us that Dr. Komori was initially an elementary teacher in Yuzurihara. He later went back to school and became a physician. His research papers and books involved his earlier experiences in Yuzurihara. His son also became a doctor and helped him in these studies.

STICKY VEGETABLES

We ate a lunch at the Home Town of Long Life market and cafe where foods typical of the area are prepared. The traditional diet in Yuzurihara is varied. We ate nine different small-portioned dishes at our lunch which included fish from a local stream, boiled potatoes with miso paste (a dish called tamaji), dark purple sweet potato, millet rice, specially prepared daikon radish, buckwheat noodles, red onions, a Japanese-style bun stuffed with azuki bean paste, and a newly introduced sticky vegetable which originated from Egypt and is now grown in Yuzurihara called moloheiya which is known to be rich in iron and calcium. Meat was absent (there is no meat market in Yuzurihara).

AN 83 YEAR OLD ON A SCOOTER

Our investigation was suddenly interrupted by an 83-year old villager by the name of Izumi Ishii who drove into the market on his motor scooter

to deliver his harvested vegetables. Mr. Ishii is Yuzurihara personified. He captured our attention immediately. His face was always filled with a smile. Here was an octogenarian who drives a motor scooter three miles to sell his vegetables at the market, and still farms his fields five to eight hours a day!

VIBRANT, HEALTHY PEOPLE...

Through my interpreters, I chatted with Mr. Ishii and another farmer. I asked them if they knew any of the people who were mentioned in the original ABC News story over three years ago. I showed them photos that were published in my book. One of these seniors peered at the small photos in my book, and without the aid of reading glasses, recognized some of the people in the original ABC News story. It was then I realized the people are amazing - **enjoying vibrant health, healthy joints, beautiful skin and even healthy vision!***

We followed Mr. Ishii to his home and his nearby fields. Earlier in the day this octogenarian had been trimming a 100-year old tree in his front yard. He was up on a **30-foot ladder** to trim the tree. Later, he plowed his vegetable garden with a hoe, doing the work of a man much younger. He seemed indefatigable.

When we were walking back to his house, another curious oldster came out to ask Mr. Ishii what was going on. This was Mr. Mitsutomo Ishii, age 90, **who also still works in his field every day**, fewer hours in the hot sweltering summer sun, but otherwise puts

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... of Yuzurihara reads Bill's Book without reading glasses



Izumi Ishii, 83, delivers his freshly harvested vegetables to the market



Typical Lunch in Yuzurihara including daikon radish and other vegetables rich in Hyaluronic Acid

in a full day's work. He also could visually recognize the pictures in my book, without the aid of reading glasses, of the people in the aforementioned ABC News story. I was in awe of what I was witnessing. Mr. Mitsutomo Ishii had no wrinkles on his face.

WHAT WAS LEARNED

My investigation resulted in a book, How To Live 100 Years Without Growing Old, which was the first layman's book about H.A. Since the writing of that book it has been demonstrated in human experiments that oral H.A. is absorbed (contrary to what many physicians believe) and that shortened H.A. molecules (low molecular weight) are absorbed better.

HYALURONIC ACID (H.A.) EXPLAINED

Normally H.A. is a long strand of two molecules that hold hands and are continually repeated, like a string of paper clips. One half of the H.A. molecule is glucosamine, the other is Glucuronic Acid. H.A. strands can be 6 million Daltons in molecular weight. Shortened H.A. (1500-3000 Daltons- Biocell Collagen II) is absorbed well when taken orally! My belief is that when H.A. is consumed with other antioxidants (quercetin, rice bran) its absorption is further improved. When Americans discover H.A., I suspect a youthful revolution will take place. Furthermore, it has become apparent that, once absorbed, oral H.A. triggers fibroblast cells in the body to make more H.A. The residents of Yuzurihara may be doing this by consuming plants (fermented soy, miso and tofu) that trigger the same effect, but the response could be

slower and may require life-long consumption of these foods. Taking H.A. supplements orally can support H.A. levels in the body.*

SUMMARY

While food supplements are not permitted to claim they can prevent or treat any health conditions, oral Hyaluronic Acid supplements may make a claim to maintain healthy tissue in the:*

Eyes* (vitreous, retina, cornea, fluid, drain) [Archives Ophthalmology 111:963-67, 1993; Medical Hypotheses 51: 483-84, 1998]

Joints* (knee, sacroiliac, shoulder, wrist, TMJ) [Artificial Organs 18: 420-24, 1994; Current Review Pain, 4:356-61, 2000; Reg Anesthesia Pain Medicine 24: 84-88, 1999]

Skin* [Journal Investigative Dermatology 114:1184-87, 2000]

CONCLUSION

*Oral supplementation with hyaluronic acid is useful in maintaining skin elasticity, joint flexibility and sharp vision among adults.** For the first time, an oral, non-prescription substance is available that supports youthful appearance, joint movement and visual response among adults of a wide age range.

References: 1. William, Judy, "Clinical study shows hyaluronic acid in BioCell Collagen II® found to have significant absorption and bioavailability," SIBR. February 2, 2004.

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