

The cancer therapy by Tullio Simoncini from Rome

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The in Italy convicted and suspended physician, Tullio Simoncini, treated a patient with breast cancer in the Clinic for Preventive Medicine (CPM) in Bilthoven, the Netherlands. This CAM clinic houses a mixture of small enterprises, where physicians and non-physicians offer a great variety of alternative and, therefore, ineffective treatments. In October 2007 a charge was brought against this clinic. A 50 years old patient with breast cancer, who had undergone a series of treatments in this clinic, was admitted to the emergency department of the University Medical Center of the Free University of Amsterdam, where she died within a few days. The attending physician refused to sign a death certificate, because the patient had died from a non-natural cause. It appeared that she had been treated in the clinic in Bilthoven with injections and infusions of sodium bicarbonate by the Italian quack Tullio Simoncini. The medical director of the clinic denied any involvement, but two tenacious journalists of the Dutch newspaper *de Volkskrant* succeeded in finding out what had exactly happened. The Public Prosecutor and the Netherlands Health Care Inspectorate have opened an investigation of the case.

Because one of us (SJJ) is fluent in Italian, we could extensively search on Italian websites for more information on the credentials of the physician involved in this case. This new star on the firmament of alternative cancer therapies is living in Rome. He calls himself a specialist in diabetes and metabolic diseases, but he is also a surgeon and a philosopher. He puts into practice different treatments against cancer already for 15 years. Since 2003 his license to practice medicine has been withdrawn and in 2006 he has been convicted by the Italian judge for wrongful death and swindling. This has not stopped him from continuing to apply his controversial treatments, not only in Italy, but apparently also in foreign countries, such as the Netherlands. He has appealed against his conviction, but we could not find information on the status of this appeal on the Italian websites.

Which theory Tullio Simoncini has made up and what does his therapy consist of? According to this physician, cancer is “simply” a fungal infection (*il cancro è un fungo*) caused by the (in alternative circles popular) *Candida albicans*, an opportunistic fungus. Supposedly, this intruder would cause formation of cysts and an uncontrolled cell division in several organs, such as liver and lungs. According to Simoncini, these fungal colonies must be eliminated. Comparable fungal theories, for which there is no scientific basis, emerge repeatedly in quackery land. Simoncini has devised a simple “target” treatment: fungi do not like sodium bicarbonate and so he has concluded that administering this is the treatment of choice. By intravenous infusion (oral administration is also possible) or even with intra-arterial catheters that are guided close to the tumor site, high concentrations of sodium bicarbonate are “deposited” repeatedly in the tumor tissues. He claims that the tumors will first become smaller and subsequently will disappear completely in 50% of patients thus treated. He does not give any proof for this and has never published any data on his wondrous therapy in a scientific journal. He also claims that the treatment is not dangerous, because sodium bicarbonate is also used in regular medical procedures. He fails to mention that this treatment is applied only in patients with definite disturbances of water and mineral metabolism and under meticulous clinical control. With the highly concentrated solutions that he administers in high amounts as well as within a short period the mineral balance in the whole body can be disturbed leading to serious and even fatal complications.

Like so many alternative healers, Tullio Simoncini feels that he is a genius unrecognized in the world of regular medicine. There are lots of misled patients who adore him and his

revolutionary treatment. The relatives of the patients who did not survive his treatment, and who have started legal procedures against Simoncini, think of course quite differently. Simoncini has websites in different languages that are still functioning where he explains his fungal theory (<http://www.curenaturalicancro.com>).

Addendum

The Dutch Health Care Inspectorate has declared on the basis of a report by two expert physicians that treatment with sodium bicarbonate for cancer is hazardous and ineffective. The Inspectorate warns that measures will be taken against physicians who apply this treatment to treat cancer. The Clinic in Bilthoven has been ordered to discontinue this treatment immediately.

Note: This is a translation in English of an article that appeared on November 19, 2007 on the website of the Dutch Association against Quackery
http://www.kwakzalverij.nl/681/De_kankertherapie_van_Dottor_Tullio_Simoncini_uit_Rome