



AITHM Seminar

John Croese

The Prince Charles Hospital, Chermside, Brisbane

Dr Tony Rahman

The Prince Charles & Royal Brisbane Hospitals

Date: Friday 11 December, 2015

Time: 1:00pm - 1:50pm

Venue: Cairns A3.2 video linked to Townsville 040-103

***"Hookworms and Gluten: A Pathogen
and a Poison to Cure Coeliac Disease?"
- John Croese***



Coeliac Disease (CeD) is a debilitating autoimmune gastrointestinal illness affecting 1-2% of the Australian population. In genetically susceptible people, ingestion of gluten-containing foods elicits an autoimmune reaction and at times severe intestinal symptoms.

A gluten-free diet is effective for some, but is expensive, inconvenient and inadvertent gluten exposure is almost unavoidable. In a recent open-label proof-of-principle clinical trial, our research group demonstrated the potential efficacy of an unlikely biological agent, the ubiquitous human hookworm - *Necator americanus* - which remains prevalent in the developing world, to improve gluten tolerance.

Our left of field approach combining a notorious pathogen with a toxin, gluten in people with CeD, will now be tested in a randomised clinical trial sponsored by JCU and coordinated by the Gastroenterology and Hepatology Department at The Prince Charles Hospital.

John Croese is a gastroenterologist who worked in Townsville for 30 years. His interest in helminths developed as a result of being confronted with a minor epidemic of eosinophilic enteritis in the local population that was caused by canine hookworms. Through a long association with Alex Loukas, his interest in hookworms has progressed to using their remarkable abilities to avoid immunological rejection to treat human disease. He is currently working as a senior medical specialist at The Prince Charles Hospital.

***"NAFLD – Foie gras or Foie grosse"
- Dr Tony Rahman***



NAFLD is a very common clinical condition where fat deposits in the liver. This has exponentially increased especially in developing nations over the last 20 years. It has a close association with the obesity epidemic but other risk factors may increase its preponderance. It is a multisystemic global problem.

This seminar will examine the 'size of the current and future problem', describe the clinical patterns of disease and other comorbidities that are often associated with this condition. The impact of NAFLD long term will be discussed and the associated incidence of chronic liver disease. Therapeutic strategies to reduce fat burden have been explored, these and future approaches will be discussed.

Dr Tony Rahman was an undergraduate at Oxford, completed his PhD at Imperial College, London, and then completed his postgraduate clinical training in London. He moved to Brisbane in 2012 and is now the Director of Gastroenterology and Hepatology at the Prince Charles Hospital in Brisbane.