

JUBI (NOW JOBELYN), SICKLE CELL AUDIENCE IN HAND, AIMS FOR JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

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ARTICLE

At the turn of the 20th. century, a chance encounter brought a retired chartered accountant with a former laboratory technician now a spiritual healer. For myriad ailments and diseases, particularly as they relate to the blood, a single remedy, sourced from local herbs, was administered. ADETUTU FOLASADE-KOYI reports how this herbal remedy, Jubi Blood Formula, has helped in anemic cases, resolving some blood-related diseases and is now relevant in the medicine of the millennium that is antagonistic to blood transfusion and surgery.

The sun would appear to be smiling near high tide for Jubi Blood Formula, once the rejected builder's corner stone which the makers, defiant of Doubting Thomas medics, have been struggling to position as an option to blood transfusion.

The Nigerian market has been slow in accepting it. Doctors were at first unyielding even in the face of startling evidence that this wonderful herb stimulates the body to make blood faster than anything known so far by man.

But, now, all that is changing. For not only do they prescribe Jubi, they themselves use it! What must gladden Chief Kolawole Awoyemi, Jubi's discoverer, and Mr. Olajuwon Okubena, the chartered accountant who took it to the laboratory and to the market-place the most is the prospect of this product finally finding favor with a large body of group users. Already, many a sickle cell club across Nigeria are on board. And the prospects of an endorsement by the Jehovah's witness sect is high.

The prospect has just come from Ajaokuta, where a Jehovah's Witness in dire need of blood transfusion opted for death. But Dr. Victor Umoh, of Township clinic, Ajaokuta, Kogi State, would not let his patient die unnecessarily. He dispatched an urgent SOS message to Lagos. And, pronto, he got packs of Jubi. Dr. Umoh reports his first encounter with Jubi: M. A., who lives in Ajaokuta, was rushed into the clinic on September 21, 1999, with internal bleeding due to a ruptured ectopic pregnancy. This was severe, and she was lapsing into unconsciousness. The usual management of the situation is to quickly operate and then to replace the blood loss by transfusion. Her PCV (packed cell volume) that day was 25 per cent, though it is known that this will drop by the time her system adjusted to the blood loss.. The operation to stop

the bleeding was successfully done that same day but her relations objected to blood transfusion for her. She is a Jehovah's witness. This was a dilemma because the following day, her PCV turned out to be 10 per cent. Now, she was fully conscious and was fortunate in that her bowel sounds returned early and she was put on Jubi, two capsules, three times daily. Two days after starting Jubi, her PCV was 13 per cent, and nine days later she was out of danger because her PCV had risen to 18 per cent. Even while her PCV was less than that, she felt strong. For fear that she might collapse if she got up from the bed, the medical team advised her to remain in bed and not get up without assistance. She started to ignore this advice without any adverse effect three days after surgery when her PCV was still around 11 per cent. At her final check up at our out patient clinic on October 8, 1999 her PCV was 25 per cent. She had remained on Jubi Formula one capsule daily till then. This case has emboldened us when it comes to giving treatment without the use of blood.

There are several other patients who have also benefited from Jubi Formula capsule or powder, given in place of blood transfusion. Most sickle cell patients who received Jubi Formula always come back to ask for more of it. K. A. (names have been changed on request) is a 28 year old sickler who lives in Kaduna. She began to use Jubi Formula in October 1999. Before then, she suffered bone pain crisis at two weekly intervals during any harmattan season. Since she started taking Jubi Formula at the rate of one capsule a day, there has been only one crisis during the last harmattan season and this was not serious. Usually, she would have pain in the joints and waist. According to her, the other benefit she has derived from taking Jubi Formula is that she is stronger and can do more at work and around the house. She is a lot more active and has decided to keep on taking the Formula.

For Bible based reasons, Jehovah's Witnesses refuse blood transfusions. But they do accept and vigorously pursue medical alternatives to blood. Happiness Maduakor, a Jehovah's witness, explains why blood transfusion is a no-no: "Blood is sacred in God's eyes. God says that the soul, or life, is in the blood. It is wrong to accept blood transfusion. Jehovah requires that we abstain from blood. This means that we must not take into our bodies in any way, other people's blood or

even our own blood that has been stored. Jehovah's Witnesses accept other kinds of mechanical treatment, such as transfusion of non-blood products like dextran, saline or hetarch and other non-blood management."

The attendant risks Happiness may be referring to could be sexually transmitted diseases, HIV, the virus that can lead to AIDS. Hepatitis B or even suffering from immune reactions when another person's blood is transfused. Sharon Googer's case is another practical example. Spiritually, Sharon Googer was a vibrant woman, a Jehovah's Witness who prayed every day. But physically, Googer, 43, was dying.

A virus had attacked her heart's lining, causing symptoms including nausea and shortness of breath. "It was as if (my heart) was encrusted in cement," she said. But her doctors could offer no assurance that she would survive the needed operation without a blood transfusion. And Googer refused to veer from her religious belief barring the use of stored blood. That left her with two options: prayer and research. "Both worked," she said. Googer discovered a new bloodless surgical program that began earlier this month at Atlanta Medical Center. The program uses a combination of drugs, surgical techniques and special equipment to reduce the amount of blood lost during surgery and hence the need for blood transfusions. Within six days, Googer was recuperating at home, health in body and soul.

But Mr. Olajuwon Okubena is convinced all these 'risks' could be curtailed with Jubi Formula (now Jobelyn), a combination of some local herbs. "These risks are virtually non-existent", he says. Pharmaceutical product analysis conducted at the Biochemistry department of the School of Pharmacy, College of Medicine, of the University of Lagos, CMUL, Idi-Araba, Lagos, confirmed that "JubiFormula (now Jobelyn) is very effective, not only in restoring haematocrit level quickly but it also has effect on the immune system." Laboratory reports say JubiFormula (now Jobelyn) has the potential to be a substitute for blood transfusion because of rapidity of restoring blood levels. "Research studies show that within 24 hours of administering this compound, the packed cells volume (PCV) is increased by as much as 15 per cent, even under very serious challenging disease conditions." JubiFormula (now Jobelyn) improves not only the red blood cells (RBC) count but also works ►

on the white blood cells (WBC).

Importantly, Jubi (now Jobelyn) works particularly in such anemic cases as in sickle cell and leukemia. With the fear of communicable diseases that go with blood transfusion, medicine has advanced. Doctors express that fear succinctly in the January 8 edition of Jehovah's witnesses: "We believe patients will still try to avoid allogeneic (donor) transfusions simply because the blood supply can never be completely safe."

How then does Jubi (now Jobelyn) work in a disease condition? Mr. Okubena, speaking on RayPower, a private radio station at Alagbado, on the outskirts of Lagos, explains: "Diseases are the result of disharmony in the body system. In the human body, blood provides the mechanism for correcting problems that arise there in terms of infection - either bacterial or viral infection. The body has brought its mechanism to correct itself but because of various factors like the food we eat, the environment and stress factors, this mechanism may not work effectively. Orthodox medicine will always refer to the immune system, which comprises the white blood cells and other aspects of the mechanism that blocks or attack diseases.

"Jubi (now Jobelyn) does not aim to tackle any disease. It only aims to repair the immune system. It boosts the white blood cells. When the immune system is okay, the natural body mechanism then fights against almost all diseases that are afflicting the body, such as diabetes, hypertension, stroke, arthritis, sickle cell and HIV/AIDS. Harmony returns to the body and disease will find no place in the body system."

Dr. Bade Adewale, a Commonwealth registered acupuncturist and an executive member of the Complimentary Medical Association of Nigeria was always on the look out for current information on natural medicine. "That was how I stumbled on Jubi (now Jobelyn). "Someone came and asked me about Jubi (now Jobelyn) and I said I don't know anything about it. So, I went in search of the product through the address, and procured some and administered it on a patient."

"As a rule, we don't transfuse blood here (Roscan Specialist Hospital on Oremeji Street, Ikeja, Lagos). Instead, I recommended Jubi (now Jobelyn) to those who needed to undergo surgery. Not only here, but in some other hospitals where I also consult. In the process of do-

attributed to the efficacy of Jubi, if you like. "Apart from that, I also use it to treat blood-related diseases, like in my hypertension remedies, I now add Jubi (now Jobelyn) to it. It is safe to say that Jubi (now Jobelyn) is a moderate remedy in treating anemic cases. Would he still recommend Jubi (now Jobelyn) if the condition was HIV? "No, I've never treated anyone with HIV. I can say however that with Jubi, a patient may not need blood transfusion, because we have operated a patient who was as white as paper and didn't need to transfuse blood"

Mrs. Hilda Ogbe, resident at 18, Delta Crescent, Benin, Edo State, recalls how she came across Jubi (now Jobelyn) and her experience with others. "I'm a practitioner, treating only sickle cell crisis with local herbs. I've been doing this for 23 years using herbs to prevent bone crisis in sickle cell patients.

"Sometime last year, a local health shop owner, Mrs. J. A. Ofurhe, sent me her sickle cell son. I treated her son with the herbs and then she also recommended Jubi (now Jobelyn) to me. That was how I first got to know of the product." She said her son's PCV had increased dramatically with the use of Jubi (now Jobelyn) (because the boy's PCV was checked before he was given Jubi). The mother left 10 capsules for me to try on some patients. I gave to a child and he responded after 10 days. His PCV was not taken before he started the therapy though. I could see that the child's conjunctiva turned pink (after using Jubi). Before this, they were pale.)

I started buying containers of Jubi (now Jobelyn) from Leo O 'Scruples here in Benin. I got leaflets and from the address on them contacted Mr. Okubena to see if I could buy hospital packs for my patients. Before I contacted him, I had tried it on myself, because my PCV was low (I was just recovering from malaria then- usually, my PCV hovers around 29 -32 per cent). "Before administering Jubi, my PCV was 29 percent (had the test at the American-funded hospital, Faith Medical Centre, Benin). After, it rose to 34 per cent.

"Another patient of mine was a very anaemic boy who was brought here by his parents. His conjunctiva was very severe and he obviously needed transfusion. But I persuaded his parents to use Jubi (now Jobelyn) instead. After two weeks, the conjunctiva was practically blood red.

"Actually, what really propelled me to start to use Jubi was arthritis, though it is yet to improve."

If you are meeting Mr. Okubena for the first time, chances are you will have the impression that he is excited about nothing but Jubi. You could be right though. A personal yearn for knowledge took him to Ibadan, where he met the custodian of the remedy, Chief Kolawole Awoyemi, Osi Sobaloju of Ibadan. Since then, there has been no looking back. Could Jubi be another alternative for blood transfusion? Perhaps, these practical examples could suffice. ■