

Apt. 316  
1900 South Eads Street  
Arlington, Va. 22202  
June 20, 1970

Joshua Lederberg, M. D.  
School of Medicine  
Stanford, California 94305

Dear Dr. Lederberg:


A column authored by you entitled "A Good Try Poses Problem" and syndicated in the Washington Post of October 11, 1969, concerned itself with mustard oil and pointed out doubts as to its safety. (S)

In a recent yoga course that I attended, the instructor recommended rubbing mustard oil into the skin as a means of skin improvement.

In view of the fact that the recommendation relates to a use of mustard oil different from that with which your article was concerned, I wonder if I may have your comment relative to the safety or lack of safety of the use of mustard oil as it was recommended by the instructor.

I enclose a self addressed envelope for your convenience.

Sincerely,

  
Eugene J. Kaplan

(\*Kusch, H.P., et al., Acta Union Intern'l against Cancer.,  
11: 699-703 1955. Dr Kusch is at the Univ of Wis Medical Sch.)

In view of experimental work\* that shows that the chronic application of mustard oil to the skin of mice will induce skin tumors ~~sk. cancers~~, I would hardly recommend its use in this way. It is of course possible that these laboratory findings are irrelevant to man, but if you want to be a guinea pig you ought to recruit yourself into a medically controlled study. Sincerely,