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## Addendum

On 18 January 1996, the US National Cancer Institute held a press conference releasing major findings from two of the intervention trials mentioned in this review: CARET<sup>138</sup> and the Physicians' Health Study.<sup>139</sup> CARET investigators announced that the intervention component of their trial was being terminated nearly 2 years early because interim analyses indicated that lung cancer incidence was unlikely to be reduced in the participants taking the combination of  $\beta$ -carotene and retinol by the scheduled end of the study. Moreover, there was a substantial possibility that the supplements might be harming subjects, consistent with the findings of the ATBC Trial discussed in this manuscript.<sup>136, 137</sup> In CARET, the relative risk estimate for lung cancer was 1.28, with a 95 percent confidence interval (CI) of 1.04-1.57. The Principal Investigator of CARET, Dr Gilbert Omenn, stated that former smokers, who comprised 34 percent of the participants when recruited, may have responded more favorably to vitamin A and  $\beta$ -carotene than current smokers. Dr Charles Hennekens stated that in the Physicians' Health Study  $\beta$ -carotene supplements had no significant effect – positive or negative – on cancer or cardiovascular disease, in his population of mostly nonsmokers. In response to these findings, investigators of the Women's Health Study<sup>140</sup> decided to remove  $\beta$ -carotene from their intervention, and continue with vitamin E and aspirin. Publication of the results from CARET and the Physicians' Health Study are anticipated by Spring 1996. We feel this new information strengthens the conclusions reached in this review.