

Latent Huntington's Disease — Response to Orthomolecular Treatment

Abram Hoffer, M.D., Ph.D.¹

November 20, 1978, Mrs. Annette B. wrote to me that her husband had recovered from schizophrenia and was well as long as he took his vitamins: niacin, ascorbic acid and Pyridoxine. Her mother had severe Huntington's Disease, as had had her grandfather. She had concluded that a nutritional program might prevent its appearance in her brother and herself.

November 17, 1981, she wrote again to report she was taking the following vitamins: Vitamin E, 800 IU, niacin, 2,500 mg, Vitamin C 1000 mg and one multiple vitamin pill. She was normal. She was back at work as an engineer having been too tired to work for the previous seven years. She had suffered constant fatigue and fear, a few perceptual problems which made it impossible for her to drive, and loss of memory. These were all gone.

I then suggested she prepare a report describing her reaction to vitamin treatment. This arrived recently. Her husband sent along a covering letter in which he wrote:

"Annette is in France now on an engineering and business trip for the company she

works for. I am pretty impressed myself by her statement and I can attest to its accuracy, other than certain small things, such as Dr. Hitchings working not only for the Fryer Clinic, but the Postgraduate Center of Mental Health when he treated me.

The change in Annette since she started the vitamin treatment and particularly the choline, has been nothing short of amazing. For instance, she was always afraid of driving before, because she had great difficulty in judging the distances. And the job she holds now is very tough. In addition I was in bed this winter almost three months with frozen feet, and she managed to function extremely well under conditions of duress, having just started her job.

Not that she wasn't always like that, a person of great strength and courage, but I can see a definite change, she used to have enormous difficulty getting up, and for the last six months has been functioning with much less sleep than she has ever had.

I think she feels if she does get HD, she can at least retard it until it is almost a normal senility. Also, she has added calcium and magnesium to her vitamin and dietary treatment, which seems to have further reduced any pain in her legs.

1. 3A - 2727 Quadra St. Victoria, B.C., Canada

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I am sending a copy of this letter with enclosures on to Dr. Hitchings and Marjorie Guthrie. I also find it strange, and with a small promise of reward, that my suffering from schizophrenia, might have led my wife and children closer to an area where there is the possibility of some protection from HD."

Huntington's Disease is a condition which should be diagnosed early. It is too destructive to wait until the person is hopelessly ill to make the diagnosis. I have therefore diagnosed her latent H.D. She has a 50 percent chance of having her mother's gene, and she had all the prodromal symptoms of H.D. which were severe enough to prevent her from working for seven years. She is now well. Will this type of program be as helpful to other children of parents with H.D.? We will not know unless they try. As there is no effective treatment now it is important that physicians and families try this approach.

Here is Mrs. Annette B.'s letter:

"You asked me in your last letter to write a paper about the treatment I have been following and its effects. I am not an excellent paper writer but I can try at least to be precise and objective.

I became aware of the megavitamin treatment when my husband took it and saw much relief from a severe case of schizophrenia which had sent him several times to mental hospitals and caused him to become handicapped after jumping out of a four-story window. He was treated by a Dr. Hitchings.

Very little time after my husband's improvement we discovered my mother had Huntington's Disease and so did some other members of our family. It was at first a terrible shock as we just thought we had won the battle over my husband's condition and we could just foresee our new difficulties. Huntington's disease is 50 percent hereditary and it implied that I or my brother or our children could also be victims of this terribly crippling disease.

I had been teaching ten years in NYC during my husband's disease and I got more exhausted and felt some days that I could not teach at all. I cannot say that I have any HD symptoms or if I do I have had them all my life. One of the symptoms of this very unknown disease is a lack of memory for people's names which I have always had but

other symptoms like movements of the fingers, face and tongue, I don't. I am 47 years old. However, that terrible lack of energy which is also common to the disease was there and it terrified me.

My husband's former doctor, Dr. Hitchings, had since moved his office to Montreal, Canada, and we decided to pay him a visit for three reasons:

1) My husband had just published a book and had been invited to read his work at McGill University.

2) My husband was so thankful for not suffering from schizophrenia anymore that he wanted to thank Dr. Hitchings in person.

3) I had in mind to ask him if HD could be in any way cured or prevented by somewhat the same kind of treatment Tom had had.

Dr. Hitchings received us in his nice office and after discussing my previous letter, he handed me an article by Dr. A. Hoffer who claimed to have cured a 60 year old patient of HD with a therapy consisting of megadoses of vitamin C, niacin, and vitamin E mostly.

My heart jumped with joy and I immediately wrote Dr. Hoffer asking his advice about trying this cure for my mother, "well-advanced in the stages of HD," and for me. Dr. Hoffer did write back advising the quantities to try to "experiment with" and stressing the importance of a good diet, meaning foods balanced with vitamins — greens, fresh vegetables, meat, little starch, and no sugar or non-natural sweets. Fruits were good, of course, but no artificial additives of any kind.

We had just made the big move from 15 years in the city to an 120 acre farm in upstate New York. I had quit my job. I now wonder why I did it. I am pretty sure it was because I couldn't handle it anymore. My head was always obscure. I could not find some words; my legs were hurting; and I felt exhausted from morning until night and terribly scared of everything. Being in the country I was scared, for instance, of substitute teaching and of driving a car.

It took me a good year before I started to realize I was getting better. I wrote to Dr. Hoffer telling him of my progress and also told him that we had not been able to try the treatment on my mom as the hospital in France had refused. But I had kept on taking

it faithfully and I was getting my energy back and my handwriting was getting more steady. I increased the niacin to 2500 mgs and reduced the C to 1500 mgs. I tried what was best for me. An interesting thing happened. I was invited to try out vitamin B6 with a whole bunch of volunteer patients; I couldn't go to try that treatment but we bought some vitamin B6 and it made me very nervous, so I stopped taking it.

These patients were selected from a CCHD group which stands for the Committee to Combat Huntington's Disease, headed by Marjorie Guthrie, the wife of Woody Guthrie, who died from that disease. I had started to correspond with the CCHD trying to educate myself about that disease and all the people trying to fight it and the only immediate positive cure I could see was Dr. Hoffer's treatment. I put Mrs. Guthrie in contact with Dr. Hoffer and they have since met.

With my energy coming back, I started a farm. I wanted to raise healthy food and I have been doing it since. We raise sheep, goats, pigs, poultry, eggs, milk and a huge garden. We bought two large freezers to preserve our food. We completed this diet by honey, health food, soya-flour spaghetti and noodles, whole wheat home-baked bread, and nuts. (We must spend a fortune on nuts).

While investigating new medical theories, my husband came upon Dr. Frederick's book on breast tumors, for which my oldest daughter and I had to be operated on several times. He read that choline and inositol would be instrumental in bringing back a proper balance or lowering the estrogen levels, which would reduce our breast tumors.

With Dr. Hoffer's permission, I added 500 mgs each of choline and inositol every day and after six months the result was amazing. I suddenly desired to drive a car and had lost the fear of driving. I have always had an engineering degree and therefore applied to Simpson Smith Elgin and joined the company in September, 1981, as an application engineer in the marketing division.

My daughter tried the choline treatment and we both lost our tumors after about four months of taking it. As my daughter put it, "it drives away your fear and your thinking

becomes sharp and your memory gets to be so good.

I feel I am happy at my job. For the first time in a long time, I can get up at 6:00 and the choline replaces coffee for me. I take the choline, inositol, Vitamin E, and one multiple B vitamin and vitamin C in the morning. I swallow the niacin at night as the flushing would be embarrassing at work.

Again I repeat, I am now 47 years old and for the first time in my life I am relaxed and I work more than I ever did. I feel secure and completely unafraid and confident, even about things like making mistakes at work, accidents, diseases, or whatever your subconscious would amplify enough to make your life impossible.

I get up every morning at 6. I eat an egg from my chickens with some of my bread, I get dressed, go to the barn, check the animals. I have 15 goats, 15 sheep, pigs and poultry. I give them hay. I come back to the house, dress for work and leave at 7:30 for my office. I always feel very good at work as I am not afraid, even of losing my job. At noon (if I haven't in the morning) I eat two hardboiled eggs, one orange, one apple, and during the day I munch on dried apples or different nuts.

At 5 p.m. I am back at the farm and get the dinner going — a piece of our home-raised meat, one frozen or fresh vegetable, a squash or a portion of natural rice and a huge salad. Sometimes we'll have a yogurt made from our goats' milk or a fruit pie for dessert. We don't eat immediately though. While dinner cooks I go to the barn with my 11 year old and feed and hay all our animals. We just had 16 baby goats and lambs and it was in Jan.-Feb. often at temperatures below zero. We live in the snow belt. After the chores we bring in the wood.

By the time seven o'clock comes we are back home ready to set the table. My husband, who is now a writer and often home, helps to cook and clean. At night when dinner is over, I give myself two hours rest on our luxurious couch while Tom or our youngest do the dishes. At ten I am in bed and I sleep soundly. On the weekends we are very busy with friends, my quilt business (I buy and sell old quilts and I have for the last four years).

I attribute this change to a combination of

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good diet and the mega-vitamin treatment of Dr. Hoffer. I did nothing psychologically to make me get up early with ease or to get rid of the pain in my legs. I always wanted so much *to be able* to work hard without fatigue and never imagined my legs could be so light. I never lost weight or gained weight either.

My feelings about HD are mixed. I feel so good now that I really don't know if I ever had a beginning of this disease and I don't worry as I believe this treatment will take care of me and my three daughters if it ever lurks in the corner. I understand other HD families in Canada have started this treatment. In a semi-simplistic explanation, I feel schizophrenia and HD are biochemical diseases, somehow related maybe due to a malfunction of the pancreas, which poisons our nervous system or our brain. I understand niacin acts as a filter for this poison.

I also understand that patients who are given daily doses of Thorazine for several years develop symptoms similar to HD and I wish the AMA would look into all of these factors instead of laughing at the megavitamin doctors.

I also agree that in a few years I might decline and start with that state of depression, panic, and fatigue again, but I know what I will do then. I will ask Dr. Hoffer if it is okay to increase the dose slightly until I get better. Dr. Hoffer, I hope you live a long time. And I hope to do so too because I love it.

Sincerely yours, Annette B."