

## Book Reviews

**Diet and Disease** by *E. Cheraskin, W.M. Ringsdorf & J.W. Clark*. Paperback Reprint, 369 pages, \$14.95, 1995.

Cheraskin and his co-authors first published this book in 1968. By reprinting it now Keats has done a great service to those who could not read when it was published. Twenty-seven years later it is as timely as it was then even though it does not contain the references the authors would have used had they published for the first time this year. This raises a very important question. Why would a book on nutrition so old be as valuable today, not merely as an historical account, but for the information it contains. This suggests either that the authors were remarkably prescient and knew then what would be important today or because nutritional research has been so stagnant that what was then *avant garde* is still not dated. Is there any other branch of medicine where a similar situation exists? This is not to say that nutrition has stood still. Pedagogic nutrition has continued to improve slowly but has rarely been helpful to patients, the people who needed it most. The major progress has been in the field of orthomolecular nutrition, i.e. the actual use of nutrition and supplements in optimum doses for treating people who are sick and for prevention. I suspect both hypotheses are correct. There has been too little new information of a clinical nature over the past 30 years and the authors were remarkably prescient in their selection of the material to be presented. Cheraskin and his co-workers are among the early pioneers in demonstrating the connection between good nutrition and good health and of course the converse — poor health which results from poor nutrition. At last it appears that some medical schools are beginning to take seriously the hard work of scientists such as Dr. Cheraskin and are beginning to create divisions in medicine which will deal with this new, for them, area of medicine. Whether they will give credit to these workers is another matter. So far no one from the establishment's studies showing how useful vitamin E is have given credit to the earlier better work completed by Drs. Wilfred and Evan Shute in the first half of this century.

As one would expect from a writer as skilful and scientific as Cheraskin, the book opens with an examination of the American diet, followed by a report on the National Disease Status. The following chapters discuss the connection between diet and health and later special attention is given to reproduction, infertility, obstetrical complications and congenital defects. They all occurred much less frequently when the diet was nutritionally adequate. I read with interest their account of folic acid and congenital defects, spina bifida, for example. Of all the vitamins they discussed this vitamin was referred to in the literature they cited more than any other single vitamin. From the information in this book it should have been possible for physicians to recommend this vitamin, better still in a B complex, and we could have been spared many decades of uncontrolled births of these babies, 25,000 each year. It is now accepted, after a terrific battle with the critics and diehards, that folic acid alone will decrease these defects by two thirds. The work discussed in this book, which confirms my observations during 45 years of practice, shows that using a multiple vitamin approach might eliminate the problem. Think of the enormous saving if each woman who got pregnant had known about this, had taken a few pennies worth each day of folic acid. The American people and people all over would have been saved billions of dollars of disease costs. Each child born with spina bifida, on the average, will cost the health plans at least \$40,000 by age 14. Cheraskin also discusses mental retardation, a term no longer politically correct, and psychiatric disease. He winds it up with considering two of the greatest killers today — cancer and heart disease. Had the medical world taken his work as seriously as it should have, think of the enormous overall saving in costs. Perhaps there would be no health crisis today.

**Dealing with Depression Naturally** by *Syd Baume*. Paperback, 270 pages, \$19.95, 1995.

Various degrees of depression will hit almost 20 percent of our population over

their lifetime. The most serious depressions requiring intensive psychiatric treatment may attack around 3%.

These most intransigent depressions, which required electric convulsive therapy (ECT) when nothing else was known to work, probably have not increased in frequency. But the milder depressions, which were suffered by many people for many years in the past, probably have increased. In the past, the serious depressions were the ones most apt to be counted.

The difficulty is that one word, DEPRESSION, is asked to carry the burden of a large number of diseases which carry with them the burden of depression. It is difficult to imagine any disease which causes discomfort to be accompanied by good cheer and euphoria. It is a common term used to describe how one feels when exams have been failed, when the house has been burned, when one has lost an argument and so on. We must sort out the reasons why people become depressed and then develop new diagnostic names for each one of them, so that the diagnosis will convey exactly what the treatment should be.

To the orthodox psychiatrist and physician depression is depression is depression, and it is treated by antidepressant medication and/or with other drugs which reduce anxiety or tranquilize the patient. The number of treatments they will do is limited. There may be ten different antidepressants and each plays a limited role, but they are all antidepressants. They are given to the whole spectrum of people with mood disorders. One of them, Prozac, has been touted as the modern panacea for almost everything. It is the Valium of the last decade before the year 2000. But they also ignore the whole spectrum of conditions which cause depression, ranging from the purely biochemical to the purely psychological.

This valuable book addresses the wide spectrum of conditions which cause depression and which should be treated by undoing the factors which create this mood disorder, and which looks upon the drugs as adjuncts to treatment and not as the primary treatment event.

In my introductory comment I wrote, "There are very few good books which describe in any comprehensive detail the con-

nection between depression and the host of environmental factors which infringe upon it." After a brief description of depression, its diagnosis, and some of the medical conditions of which depression is a symptom, the author describes a wide range of environmental conditions which promote depression. These include nutrition, the need for extra supplements, vitamins, minerals, amino acids, fats, the evils of the modern high sugar, low fat diet, allergies. It discusses the impact of the day to night diurnal rhythms, stress, and psychological factors.

The treatment in each case is based upon the reason why it is there. If the depression comes from too much sugar, the treatment is simple - cut out the sugar and improve the diet. If the depression is there because of a milk allergy, eliminate the dairy products. During my 45 years of practice I have seen many examples of every one of the these conditions, and have seen how successful these carefully aimed treatments can be, when the use of drugs alone has not been of any value. I have found that the best way to treat depression is to diagnose accurately, treat the causes, and use aids such as drugs when having done the preceding has not been effective and when an additional push is needed. Many patients do need these drugs, but they always work so much better and are required in lesser doses when the other causes of depression are treated. They may not be needed for as long periods of time.

This is a very good book. I wish every therapist, every medical columnist, and every expert in this field would read this and similar books, and take to heart the important messages contained therein. They might then spare us the continual examination and re-examination of the hundreds of psychosocial factors we all have to live and deal with all our lives, and which are very minor players in the modern epidemic of mood disorders.

**Solved: The Riddle of Illness**, by *Stephen E. Langer & James F. Scheer*. Paperback, 220 pages, \$12.95, 1995.

This is the second edition of the book which first appeared in 1984, revised and expanded. Thyroid gland dysfunction and inadequate delivery of the essential thyroid hormones are major players in causing de-

pression. But this gland, the main controller of energy production by the cells of the body, is also involved in other chronic diseases such as arthritis, diabetes, cancer, heart conditions and sexual problems. And why not? Unless we are healthy, how can we continue to function as our bodies were meant to? After all, nature did not waste millions of years producing people designed to suffer from all these diseases of modern civilization. But nature can not do what is impossible, deal with vast systemic changes in our way of living in a scant few centuries of existence. Nature assumed that it would always have the tools of good health. It will assert itself eventually, and only those inhabitants who have the wisdom to avoid the factors which lead to disease will eventually inherit the earth.

The best single simple test of thyroid function is the body temperature. If the hormone is lacking body temperature is low. Dr. Broda Barnes first drew widespread attention to this. He developed the use of whole thyroid (desiccated thyroid) as a main treatment, using the effect on temperature as a guide to dose. When he began his work the pure synthetic hormones were not readily available. The original thyroid preparation contains both T4 and T3, and both are needed. The gland manufactures T4 and the tissues convert some of it into T3. Drs. Langer and Scheer describe this condition in modern terms, taking advantage of the new information about nutrition and supplements. I have found their first book very valuable and expect this latest one to be even more helpful. I have seen how restoring thyroid function to normal has benefitted so many of my patients.

In judging the quality of medical texts I use my own experience as a guide. If I find that the book improves the quality of the care I can give my patients, I consider it a good book. This is one of these.

**AIDS and Chinese Medicine.** *Qingcai Zhang & Hong-yen Hsu.* Paperback, 242 pages, \$14.95, 1995.

For centuries the main component of medicine has been nutrition and the use of medicinal plants or herbs. With the introduction of modern chemistry it became possible to extract the active ingredients from these

plants, and with the aid of the modern patent system it became profitable to use these chemicals as medicine. Synthetic chemistry received a major impetus with the synthesis of the modern antihistamines about 50 years ago, and it has expanded enormously, with an amazing development of synthetics that are totally foreign to the human body (xenobiotics), which have been found to have therapeutic powers but, of course, carry with them the possibility of toxic reactions. Modern pharmacology teaches that if the drug is not toxic, it probably does not have any useful therapeutic properties.

But there is a reawakening of interest in the use of the original herbs which contain active molecules, are much cheaper, and of course are less toxic. This has fueled a resurgence of interest in Chinese medicine, which has been describing the use of the herbs for millenia.

This book describes the use of these Chinese remedies for the modern disease AIDS. Viruses are not modern. They have been present forever, and it should not be surprising that ancient remedies which helped deal with viruses so many years ago are able to deal with some of them today. There are no drugs which are really effective in curing AIDS, nor in helping patients achieve a better quality and duration of life that is worthwhile. The best treatments, in my opinion, are orthomolecular, the use of nutrition, and supplements designed to improve the power of the immune system. Any herbs that have the same effect ought to be helpful and should be explored. Perhaps one day a chemical, or a group of chemicals, will be extracted from the best of these herbs which might have a much more direct and specific effect in controlling AIDS.

**The Yeast Connection and the Woman** by *William G. Crook, M.D.* Professional Books, Inc. Jackson, TN. Paperback, 732 pages, \$17.95, 1995.

New constellations of ideas, new ways of seeing phenomena, are not easily accepted by the medical profession. It may take 40 or more years. The time required before the new paradigm becomes the norm depends upon three main factors: (1) the idea itself, (2) its propagation, and (3) long life. Thus, Darwin formulated the theory of evolution.

It was propagandized by Thomas Huxley, and both lived a long time afterward. The same three roles may be played by the same person. Thus, Freud developed the basic ideas of psychoanalysis, he was his own best propagandist, and he lived a long time. Thus, it is possible to introduce new paradigms which are either very good or very bad. Time, however, will sort that out and eventually remove the bad, as is happening today with analysis.

The first clear exposition of the role played by chronic candida infections was presented by Dr. C. Orion Truss, of Birmingham, Alabama. I am very proud that his first four papers were published in this journal in 1978, 1980, 1981 and 1984.

Dr. Crook is the main propagandist for this work, but he is also more. He has added a great deal of nutritional, ecological, and herbal information which can be used in treatment. His first anti-yeast book came out in 1986 and had a fantastic, wide distribution. This is only nine years ago. But as a result of the fine work of these two eminent clinicians, it is likely we can avoid the usual forty years delay, and may see these novel ideas taught in medical schools within the next five or ten years.

Medical colleges in the US are rapidly taking up the theory and practice of alternative therapy, and surely they can not much longer avoid teaching what these two physicians have discovered.

This book is addressed to women because they are more likely to harbor chronic candida infection than men, but we are not free of it and what is said for women will also apply to men - with certain exceptions - when it comes to describing the pernicious effects on health and when treatment is discussed.

But this is more than an anti candida manual. It is a good orthomolecular book, which describes the optimum diets which should be followed and the use of nutrients. It also describes the value of herbs, the importance of medication, and the alternatives to medication which may be very valuable.

My own experience with the candida problem is in line with the descriptions given by Dr. Crook. When medical schools at last join the enlightened ranks of orthomolecular and

ecological medicine, they may use Dr. Crook's book as their textbook - they will if they wish to treat the subject adequately.

**Why We Will Never Win The War On AIDS** by *B.J. Ellison and P.H. Duesberg*. Inside Story Communications, El Cerrito, CA 94530. Paperback, 292 pages, \$19.95, 1994.

Beginning in 1980, acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) has overtaken all the cancers as the most costly human disease venture into an attempt to find its causes and its treatment. Through various organizations, over four billion dollars is allocated each year. The most common view is that AIDS is due to an infection by the HIV virus which is transmitted sexually, through contaminated needles, and by blood transfusion or blood fractions given patients with hemophilia. This view, promoted by every medical establishment everywhere, fuels the tremendous activity to prove the cause, to develop a treatment, and to prepare a vaccine. So far, none of these have been achieved. One would think that after fifteen years of frenetic activity something better could have been accomplished.

The major therapeutic drug is AZT, a very toxic drug which may be worse than the disease it is supposed to treat. This reminds me of the war against cancer that was started under President Nixon which has been equally disappointing. Perhaps this is due to the fact that the leaders in the war on both these diseases are operating under the wrong paradigm. Perhaps AIDS is not caused by a virus, perhaps - if it is a syndrome - it is caused by many factors, and perhaps the hunt for the xenobiotic that will cure it is a mirage. This is the message in this book.

It would be easy to dismiss this book as a diatribe against the cancer and AIDS establishments, but it is authored by Bryan J. Ellison, a student of Dr. Peter H. Duesberg, and by Professor Duesberg, one of the world's experts on retroviruses. It is not written like a diatribe. It has the style and the authority of a scientific treatise. It must be read not only to find out what the current controversy is all about, but as an example of how a powerful establishment blindly adherent to a paradigm can prevent any opposing paradigm from being heard. It is reminiscent of the

way the North American psychiatric establishment dealt with orthomolecular psychiatry - and still does. On the cover is written, "Greed, power, sex and politics have combined to create the biggest SCAM in medical history: AIDS."

The Journal of Orthomolecular Medicine has carried several reports on AIDS,<sup>1</sup> and this book is a timely review of the whole history of AIDS.

Dr. Duesberg maintains: (1) that Koch's postulates, which are needed to establish a causal relationship between any infective organism and a disease, have not been established; every attempt to do so has given negative results. (2) HIV is a relatively benign virus, much like the cold sore virus, herpes simplex. It may be transferred from a mother to her fetus, may be transmitted sexually, or by blood injection, as are other viruses, but is not the cause of the syndrome called AIDS. (3) That the syndrome is being given ever wider interpretations, which means that old diseases formerly not accepted as AIDS will be. For example, tuberculosis will be reclassified as AIDS if HIV is found. If we were to apply this reasoning to the cold virus, then any person with tuberculosis who also had the cold virus would be rediagnosed as a case of herpes. (4) AZT is toxic to anyone who takes it. (5) The public has been frightened by using the wrong epidemiological data. For example, each year the number of new cases is added to the previous year's totals giving it an exponential growth curve upward, when in reality the increase is now flat and way below confident predictions. (6) Countries where it was predicted AIDS would be totally devastating have very few cases compared to the US. (7) AIDS, the syndrome, is caused by lifestyle patterns particularly by the heavy use of drugs, (narcotics, nitrite poppers, hallucinogens, alcohol), by malnutrition, and by other infections such as candida and syphilis which weaken the immune system. These and other arguments are described in detail in this book.

Nutritional and other lifestyle treatments have been ignored by the AIDS establishment. It is said that when Dr. Gallo first heard that vitamin C in large doses might be helpful he found it very amusing. But these reports of the value of orthomolecular treat-

ments have shown that these safe treatments have the following main advantages: (1) they are therapeutic and, (2) they do not kill anyone.

You must read this book, not only because it details the arguments between the two main AIDS schools but because it details the ways and means by which one paradigm tries to destroy the other. The new paradigm is gaining strength and the old one is weakening as more and more physicians and scientists are joining. I hope that Ellison and Duesberg will write a sequel in about five years.

#### Note

- 1a) Buist R. AIDS, vitamin C and egg lecithin. *J of Orthomolecular Medicine*, 3:55-56, 1988.
- b) Caiazza S. Neuropsychiatric AIDS and neurosyphilis: overlap. *J Orthomolecular Medicine*, 3:117-122, 1988.
- c) Smith RS. Is fish oil protective against AIDS? *J Orthomolecular Medicine* 6:64-66, 1991.
- d) Priestly J. Highly beneficial results in the treatment of AIDS. *J Orthomolecular Medicine* 6:174-180, 1991.
- e) Hoffer A. Editorial: Misconduct in High Places; Freedom to Practise Complementary Medicine Gaining Momentum. *J Orthomolecular Medicine*, 8:67-68, 1993.

**Optimal Wellness. Where Mainstream and Alternative Medicine Meet** by R. Golan. Ballantine Books, A Division of Random House, Inc., New York, New York 10022. Paperback, 576 pages, \$20.00, 1995.

The rising toll of chronic ill health, world wide, is at last getting very serious attention, not only from those who are sick and naturally must pay attention to their own problems, but also from the rest of the population who are facing escalating sickness costs in providing care for themselves and others. The reasons are complex, but one of the main causes is the maladaptation to the foods we are providing our bodies. The evidence has been accumulating for years. It is reviewed again in the book by Crawford and Marsh reviewed here, but it has not yet penetrated into our medical schools.

The neglect of optimal nutrition in our medical education represents a serious pathological departure from our earlier practice of medicine, which did pay a lot more attention to nutrition. The new paradigm beginning to

swell into medicine is thus a return to the earlier paradigm, but it must fight its way in as if it had not existed before. It has to overcome the massive takeover of medicine by xenobiotics, by surgery, and by virology and bacteriology. Yet the wars on cancer and on AIDS after the expenditure of billions and the attention of thousands of physicians and scientists, have not yielded much value for the suffering millions. Modern psychiatry is even more backward. In 1830 to 1850 Dr. John Conolly reported that half the insane people given decent shelter, good food and humane attention recovered. They would most likely be called schizophrenic today. With modern tranquilizers alone the recovery rate is only 25%. Of course, they are not given good food, decent shelter, nor much humane care.

In this book Dr. Golan describes what should be done if people are to become well and remain well. This is not an alternative to medicine but is an alternative to medicine as many practice it. It is a return to the medical fold. The way to attain optimal health, according to Dr. Golan, is to eat the right foods, which may have to be tailored for each individual, to use the right nutrients in optimum amounts, and to combine this with the optimum use of modern medicine and surgery.

Part III describes The Ten Common Denominators of Illness such as deficiencies, poor digestion and assimilation, hypoglycemia, allergies, hypersensitivity. In Part IV a number of common conditions are described with the treatment he has found helpful including nutrition and the right herbs. I found a minor irritant in his statement about the dangers of oxidized vitamin C in the body. Dehydro ascorbic acid in large amounts is toxic. Some time ago I calculated the ratio of the reduced vitamin over the oxidized form and found that based upon the literature the greater the stress on the individual the greater was the amount of oxidized vitamin C. This is described in Irwin Stone's book, "The Healing Factor." However, recent work by Dr. Levine of NIMH raises the question whether in fact any appreciable amount of dehydro ascorbic acid is really formed. This question is not settled yet. In any event, the solution to excess formation of the oxidized form is to take ample amounts

of the natural reduced form of this important vitamin.

This is a useful text which will be very valuable in guiding physicians to good medical practice. Many of the enormous problems generated by the widespread pandemic of ill health could be alleviated if the principles enunciated in this text were widely used.

**Turning Lead Into Gold: How Heavy Metal Poisoning Can Affect Your Child and How to Prevent and Treat It** by Nancy Hallaway and Zigurts Strauts, New Star Books, Vancouver, B.C. Paperback, 215 pages, \$18.00, 1995.

In this book Nancy Hallaway describes how her twin boys began to recover from one of the most serious of children's diseases, infantile autism, when it was recognized by Dr. Zigurts Strauts that they suffered a heavy lead burden and treatment was started to remove the lead. They are not yet well, but they are improving and heading toward recovery. The behaviour of these two boys was awful. During my career of seeing over 1500 children since 1960, I can not recall children that were as sick as these boys were. They were given Ritalin, and Anafranil which helped a little. The boys were examined and re-examined and the diagnosis given back was what the parents already knew — they were sick and uncontrollable.

Their parents did not know that psychiatric pediatric diagnosis is not etiological — it does not indicate what treatment should be used. It is merely descriptive and has divided children into about fifty different diagnostic terms, adjectives which tell us a little about some of their behaviour and nothing about the treatment they would best respond to. It is like dividing peptic ulcer into a stomach-burping-disorder, or a stomach-pain-disorder, or a discomfort-after-eating-disorder, or a disorder-which-sometimes-responds-to-antacids.

With prodigious effort and the aid of some workers, the boys made a little progress in developing some human characteristics. But it was only after Dr. Strauts tested them for lead burden and began to remove that burden by the use of chelation therapy (penicillamine), and by the addition of essential minerals, that the boys began to recover.

I am not surprised this occurred in Vancouver. Some years ago I pointed out that in some places in Vancouver, the amount of lead in the surface soil is so great that people growing their own vegetables would be poisoned by it if they did not wash off the soil particles very carefully and thoroughly. There is more lead in the surface soil of some places in Vancouver than there is downstream from the smelters in Trail, B.C. There is less lead around since it has been removed from the gasoline, but plenty is left. It is found in some tinned goods from the lead solder, in houses with old lead-based paint, in some dishes, and some old toys. Since lead particles are heavy they tend to occur within three feet of the surface of the ground, so that children playing in this atmosphere would be getting a heavy load of lead while adults walking in the same atmosphere would have their heads above it.

The diagnosis is relatively simple. Thinking about it as a possibility is most difficult for most psychiatrists, who are not educated in the importance of biochemical factors in causing psychiatric disorder. Hair analysis for lead is important, blood analysis less important, but a special test may be needed to demonstrate the burden of the heavy metal, using a chelating compound such as penicillamine to increase the excretion. One of the most important lessons from this book is that every disturbed child will need to be

examined for the presence of heavy metal toxicity. The heavy metals are mercury, lead, cadmium, copper, arsenic, nickel, aluminum and tin. Copper in small doses is essential, in large doses it is harmful. The heavy metals are also implicated in Alzheimer's disease. Aluminum appears to be a factor but mercury, which is more pervasive and is in almost everyone's mouth in the mercury fillings (called silver fillings to avoid referring to mercury), is a much more important factor. Mercury induces changes in the brain which are almost identical with those found in Alzheimer's brains.

Public health officers can no longer avoid carrying out their major responsibility, which is to protect us all against the heavy metal contamination which is present within our environment; they are probably more deadly than many infectious diseases because they are invisible, whereas infections are easily spotted.

I urge all parents and all personnel involved in child care to read this book and to absorb its message. It is criminal to allow our children to be poisoned by these heavy metals when the solution is so simple: suspect, test, diagnose, and treat, and ensure that we do not keep adding to the burden of young people who will not become normal because they are being poisoned by these heavy metals.

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