

Only You

Willard Bertrand, DC

Physics is the study and application of the laws that govern motion, matter, and energy; physics is the epitome of science.

The college student was barely able to mumble his name through the swollen lips.

"This is Jeff," his mother Alieta said, after Jeff mumbled something and made some visual apologies for not being able to talk clearly.

The grotesque, blotchy erythematous skin of his face was puffed out in hideous proportions to match the equally disturbed lining of his mouth and throat, which caused him to retch uncontrollably. His chest and back were affected in like manner, leaving little opportunity for a restful sleep.

Two days ago Jeff had finished a two week course of prednisone that subdued his hives to a tolerable level. His problem today was whether or not he should go back on the prednisone.

Obviously, he could not tolerate much more.

Examination revealed an atlas subluxation, severe urticaria, and chronic fatigue. The atlas was not difficult to adjust, since he had no pain and little spasm was associated with it. I then used a microcurrent stimulator to locate and charge the points the machine picked out with low resistance, about 25 points in all. He started a 1,000 mcg sublingual, B-12 lozenge, along with a stress vitamin and strict orders to rest. He was trained to slow his breathing pattern to two counts of inhalation with four counts of exhalation, a switch from his shallow chest breathing to deeper abdominal breathing. He was limited to a hypoallergenic diet as researched by Breneman in the Basics of Food Allergy. Finally, he was told to dissolve four boxes of baking soda in a tepid bath and soak for as long as possible throughout the day and night.

He returned the next day -- well, I think it was him. He was now a handsome young man with hardly a trace of redness or swelling anywhere on his body. I asked him to tell me what he thought about chiropractic care, and made him keep his honor as a physics major to keep his explanation scientific. Of course he knew nothing of the autonomic nervous system or spinal subluxation, so he simply said, "This would require further study."

Of course he did not know the medical doctor was simply masking the cause of the hives with the prednisone (Soter NA: Urticaria: current therapy. Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology, 86(6) Pt 2:1009-14, December 1990). Soter stated that the ideal treatment for urticaria is identification and removal of its cause; however, no underlying cause was sought in the treatment of this young man as is the case in the majority of those afflicted with urticaria. His medical doctor needed to read the JACI to recognize that it is best to avoid repeated injections of epinephrine and the systemic administration of corticosteroids.

He did not know that food and drug allergies are often associated with urticaria in infants according to Legrain V, Taieb A, Sage T, Maleville JSO: Urticaria in Infants: a study of 40 patients.

Pediatric Dermatology, 7(2):101-7, June 1990. Here a retrospective study was carried out in 40 infants, age 1-24 months, with urticaria. Acute urticaria was seen most frequently (85 percent), followed by recurrent (10 percent), and chronic disease (5 percent). An underlying cause was identified or suspected in 65 percent of cases: foods in 25 percent, and drugs and infections in 37.5 percent. Under six months of age, all infants had acute urticaria and 75 percent had cow's milk allergy. After six months of age, the main causes were drug intake (mostly aspirin and Amoxicillin) and/or infections, mainly viral, (50 percent).

He did not know that spinal subluxation caused irritation to nerves and that urticaria was primarily a neural phenomenon. He had not read Hernanz A, Muelas G, Borbujo JSO: Plasma neuropeptide pattern in acute idiopathic urticaria. International Archives of Allergy and Applied Immunology, 90(2):198-200, 1989, where the authors proved that immediate hypersensitivity responses, as acute urticaria, produce a release of neuropeptides by nerve endings which present specificity of recognition by mast cells, basophils, and other target cells.

I took the opportunity to impress upon him the importance of listening to his body's early warning signs of fatigue. This did not include a free personalized calendar with his next year's adjustments circled in yellow. Just a simple physiologic explanation that when you push your body beyond certain limits it will eventually dysfunction. The earliest dysfunction may be slight such as chronic headache, heartburn, and fatigue. "Generally, routine exercise coupled with a nutritious diet and relaxed lifestyle will alleviate any mild symptoms," I said. He was instructed to go out and be well and return for his annual physical in one year.

Chiropractic, like physics, is a study and application of the laws that govern motion, matter, and energy. Just as the heat from a candle will excite water to a boil, stress from the environment will cause the body to overreact. Of course, the body is much more complex than water, but the laws of physics that govern water also govern the body.

Speaking of physics, can the physics major explain the forces that push water to boil? Can an equation be written that describes the unique molecular attraction between water molecules? Why water boils remains a mystery of physics without diminishing its scientific basis. There are no physicists that would place boiling water outside of the scope of physics.

Chiropractors are now establishing standards of practice that will hopefully give them the ability to study and apply the observation made by D.D. Palmer in 1910, that too much or too little tone is a cause of disease. After all, only you, as a chiropractor, can relieve nerve interference, give nutritional advice, prescribe a program of exercise and relaxation. Only you.

Willard Bertrand, D.C.
Union, Oregon

APRIL 1992