

## News of Interest

G. Douglas Andersen, DC, DACBSP, CCN

Every now and then we have some unexpected time (in my case, it was due to a 5 mm lateral protrusion at L3-L4) where we are able to browse in our personal libraries and attempt to keep up with the vast amounts of technical literature that constantly comes across our desks. Here are the highlights of one such Sunday.

Traditional medicine tells us that most people store enough vitamin B12 to last for years. If a patient is not anemic or has a negative Schilling test, no B12 deficiency supposedly exists. It also seems that extra B12 helps a whole lot of people. Traditional medicine has told us for years it is a pure placebo response. Now, an article in Medical World News, November 1991, "Red Cell Is Inadequate As a Red Flag for Low B12," states that other more accurate tests, such as serum methylmalonic acid, may reveal deficiencies previously missed. Comment: If you suspect a B12 deficiency, try two weeks of a good quality B12. If your patients state that there has been a 50 percent reduction in their complaints that you suspect may have been B12 related, you have most likely saved them an expensive blood test.

Most of us know that calcium citrate is better absorbed than calcium carbonate. We also know that single nutrient loading should be reserved for very specific conditions. All the calcium hype of the last few years has, I feel, misled the public and oversimplified the osteoporosis problem. Thus, I was pleased when I saw a study in the July 1991 issue of Geriatrics that revealed not just a halting of bone loss, but an osseous gain when small amounts of zinc, copper, and manganese were added to patients who were supplementing with 1,000 mg of calcium citrate per day; patients on calcium alone did not gain bone.

I came across some interesting studies involving lead and tap water. The first, from the March 1992 issue of Nutrition Action Health Letter, excerpted a study from the New England Journal of Medicine, Number 326, 1992, which stated that there are higher tap water lead levels in the morning. The editors recommended running tap water two minutes before dietary consumption. In the spirit of conservation, I recommend that this water be used for your household cleaning and for house plants.

The American Journal of Public Health, Vol. 81, 1991, contained two related studies: The first involved 600 Montreal suburban households with tap water that met both U.S. and Canadian clean water standards. Three hundred of the households had reverse osmosis filters installed under their sinks. After two years, the results were that tap water drinkers had a gastrointestinal illness once every 16 months, while filtered water consumers averaged one gastrointestinal bout every 24 months. The researchers also stated that bacteria levels were highest when the water had not been used, and recommended letting the water run 30 seconds in the morning before use. So, now we have a second reason for your patients who drink water from the tap to be patient in the morning.

In this same issue of the American Journal of Public Health there was another interesting study that revealed when people reuse plastic bread bags by turning them inside out to get rid of the crumbs and moisture, the paint on the bag's label contained lead that was absorbed into the foods it touched, with

levels as high as 100 mcg for a piece of food the size of a slice of bread. The bottom line is instruct your patients who do recycle not to store food in used bread bags inside out unless, of course, it is just a clear plastic bag.

From the Annals of Internal Medicine, Volume III, 1989, a case study of yellow dye #6 was presented. In one man this substance caused cramps, hives, and a right lower quadrant abdominal pain. Many of the leading brands of multivitamins found in supermarkets and drugstores contain food coloring, including yellow dye #6. So, the next time your patients complain about the higher price of the multivitamins you sell or the brands you recommend at the health food store, you can explain to them that it costs more to produce vitamins and minerals without unneeded toxins that will break rapidly for maximal absorption. I also recommend that you do not buy vitamins without an expiration date on the bottle due to the fact that products that are old may be less potent and/or bioavailable.

Most companies who sell fish oil capsules now include small amounts of vitamin E in the formula to protect the oil in the capsule from becoming rancid. A study from Tufts University that was published in the Journal of Nutrition, Volume 4, 1984, showed that women who consumed fish oil (six capsules per day) had lower triglycerides, but had higher blood peroxide levels. Therefore, those of you who use fish oil supplements in your practice should also recommend the consumption of 800 IU of vitamin E, which has been shown to lower blood peroxide levels.

Speaking of vitamin E, a University of Toronto study on 28 cardiac bypass patients had some interesting results. Fourteen of those who had surgery were given 300 mg of pharmaceutical dose vitamin E for two weeks prior to their surgery. After surgery, testing showed the E supplemented group had less free radical damage in the first six hours after surgery, and their heart function returned to normal faster than the placebo group. This author supplements every patient before surgery with extra antioxidants as well as natural anti-inflammatories such as proteolytic enzymes, and trace minerals such as zinc and manganese that are needed to help wounds heal. It is also my opinion that in the next 20 years we will at long last see surgeons concentrate on preloading their patients with the appropriate micronutrients needed for the trauma their bodies will be incurring.

Finally, a recent study from the Journal of Infectious Diseases involved 60 healthy people who were contaminated with a cold virus. They were divided into four groups and given either aspirin, acetaminophen, ibuprofen, or a placebo pill for seven days. None of the medications reduced virus multiplications. Those on aspirin and acetaminophen actually took longer to heal than the placebo group. I sure would have liked to see a high dose antioxidant group and a spinal manipulation group included in that study.

*G. Douglas Andersen, D.C.*  
*Brea, California*

MAY 1992