

Vitamin injections may be necessary



George
Meinig,
DDS

Special to the News

Dear Dr. Meinig:

My sister's doctor gives her a B₁₂ shot every month. She claims without it she becomes irritable, weak and depressed. She is kind of kooky anyway, but I think her doctor is taking her for her money. I don't want to be unjust. Is there any basis for her claims? Not my initials please, but sing me D.D.

Dear D.D.:

Many people who hear these stories about B₁₂ injections feel they are a come-on and they aren't alone. Numbers of physicians who don't use this vitamin, except for treating pernicious anemia cases, call doctors who use it quacks.

Your sister's symptoms are very common ones found to respond to the use of B₁₂.

Other disorders related to its deficiency, in addition to your sister's depression and irritability, are fatigue, poor appetite, insomnia, constipation, diarrhea, burning and smoothness of the tongue, rapid heartbeat, numbness and tingling of the legs, walking and speaking difficulties, and pernicious anemia.

Until 1926, a diagnosis of pernicious anemia was a death sentence. Doctors thought the severe loss of red blood cells that was killing 30,000 a year was due to something attacking and destroying the cells.

In 1926, two Boston physicians, George R. Minot and William P. Murphy, announced they could free patients from the disease by feeding them large amounts of liver each day. The treatment didn't prove very appealing to many of its victims.

Our Health

Drs. Minot and Murphy won the Nobel Prize for their discovery, but the isolation of the beneficial active ingredients present in the liver took the work of numbers of scientists more than 20 years of research.

In 1948, a team of five researchers at Merck and Company produced a pinch of the brilliant red crystals they christened vitamin B₁₂. By one of those freaks of chance quite common in medical research, Dr. Lester Smith, a British researcher, also announced the discovery of the vitamin just a week later.

The first patient to receive that pinch of B₁₂ was a 66-year-old woman near death from the anemia and its effects. Within hours of receiving that first shot every made of B₁₂, strength returned to limbs that no longer supported her, color came into her cheeks, her appetite returned, and her red-blood-cell count went from 1,500,000 to 4,000,000 in 22 days.

Vitamin B₁₂ is rich in animal

meats, particularly liver, kidneys, oysters, clams, brain, crab and salmon. It is contained in much smaller amounts in other meats, fish, milk, cheese and eggs. It is not present in vegetables or fruits.

New ailments are responding to B₁₂ injections. Asthma in children under nine years of age, bursitis, multiple sclerosis, heel spurs and premenstrual syndrome are recent additions that, in certain cases, are related to a B₁₂ deficiency.

Oral supplements of B₁₂ often prove disappointing. Sublingual tablets help and are more successful, but intramuscular or intravenous injections are the most beneficial. When doses must be injected daily or several times weekly, patients are taught to give their own injections much the same as diabetics do with insulin.

Vegetarians, unless they eat or drink milk products, cheese and eggs, are frequently B₁₂ deficient.

Well, D.D., I think you can see from the above that your sister isn't mentally deranged, but does have a need for vitamin B₁₂. Dr. Roger Williams, in his book "Nutrition Against Disease," said, "Vitamin B₁₂ is definitely a link in the nutritional chain that protects against mental disease." And, I might add, for numbers of other conditions.

777