

MIRACLES OF LIFE

By John A. Myers, M.D., F.R.S.H.



Iodine And Other Trace Elements Play Vital Roles In Our Growth And Health

A graduate of the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine (1935), John A. Myers, M.D., began his studies with a bachelor's and a master's degree in Electrical Engineering from Johns Hopkins.

In Internal Medicine, Dr. Myers is particularly interested in the trace elements and in the interrelationships of the biochemistry of cellular function and the application of nutritional elements to improve the metabolism of the body systems. He uses the teeth and the eyes, the most highly differentiated structures of the body, as measuring agents to evaluate metabolic response to treatment.

Dr. Myers is coauthor, with Karl H. Schutte, Ph.D., of one of the classic works of nutritional science: Metabolic Aspects of Health — Nutritional Elements in Health And Disease. An article by Dr. Myers in the March, 1980 Let's LIVE

("Well-Fed and Ill-Nourished") drew an overwhelming popular response.

The word "miracle" conjures up different ideas in each of us. It is a word we like to use to depict something that appeals to us as extremely unusual in our sphere of life. To all of us without exception, the miracle of birth is the greatest of all. To see a newborn baby with all of its parts and organs perfection in miniature, is a thrill to behold and to contemplate. However, the miracle of birth must be supported by the proper nutrition to promote the miracle of metabolism, or it will end in catastrophe.

The study of the generation of life through embryology and genetics has inspired the attention of scientists from the beginning of time. The study of genetics led to the discovery of the chromosomes and genes, and eventually to the template of life called "DNA" (Deoxyribonucleic Acid). Modifying this code is called genetic engineering. By the miracle of genetic engineering we can select and combine sections of the DNA code and use it to manufacture a single hormone such as human insulin. This modification is done in the DNA of bacteria which grow and produce the insulin. This human insulin is harvested from the bacteria and used

as an exact replacement to treat diabetic patients.

Along with genetics we have recently found that the miracle of birth can be modified by the elements of nutrition that are fed to the mother. It is known, for example, that insufficient copper in the diet of the mother will lead to offspring that have severely damaged brains. This is described in my book *Metabolic Aspects of Health*.

Dr. Francis Pottenger showed that the heating of the food fed to cats could cause them to have kittens born with goiter, skeletal deformities, and many other disease characteristics that occur in humans; and after four generations on heated food they lose their ability to procreate. This makes one think of the Second Commandment which says, "I will visit the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me."

We are now seeing children born with cancer, with crippling bone diseases of every imaginable type, and with crippled bodies that hardly look like a human being. These are all traceable to the inadequate diet of the mother deficient in the basic trace elements, iodine and amino acids, and made even worse by smoking and consuming alcohol. Of course there is no life without protein, which contains the twenty amino acids necessary for nutrition, but it seems to me that the guiding forces of procreation are the mineral elements and iodine.

"... the miracle of birth must be supported by the proper nutrition ..."

Much is said about "natural living." By that we mean using only the foods of nature without supplementation. There have been several examples in the world where the fortuitous concentration of the elements of life are supplied to the people in these areas, and these elements have given them

good health and longevity.

An article was published by Dr. Alexander Leaf in the January 1973 issue of *National Geographic* and reviewed in my paper entitled "Iodine And Trace Elements In The Promotion And Maintenance of Metabolic Excellence," which is now found in my book *Metabolic Aspects of Health*. To me it seems very clear that the people in these three areas of the world obtained the necessary minerals from the silt of the rivers that ran through their country. These rivers washed the mineral elements from the mountains behind them. The silt-laden rivers supplied water and minerals to their domestic animals, their crops, and themselves.

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The DNA molecule which represents the template of life is the most durable substance on the face of the earth. When properly nourished in an acceptable setting, it reproduces itself in a most remarkable way and keeps itself healthy over a long period of time.

On August 3, 1978 I gave a lecture to the Convention of the Pennsylvania Society for Natural Living. This Convention was held at Bucknell University in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. This society represents the ideal in the interest of people who want to live by nature's bounty without supplementation. My lecture was entitled "The Weakest Link." This was a discussion of the role that vitamin C plays in all life.

It was especially directed, however, to the fact that vitamin C is manufactured in tremendous quantity in all forms of life except in four species: the human, the anthropoid ape, the guinea pig and some birds. *Every other living thing* had the enzymes, which are the tools of life, passed on to them in their genetic code to manufacture vitamin C from the moment of con-

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ception.

Dr. Irwin Stone, in his book entitled *Vitamin C, The Missing Link*, argues that by genetic modification some 60 million years ago the human lost one of the four enzymes necessary to make this important substance. This immediately requires that vitamin C be supplied in the diet of all humans. If a mother is properly fed, she will pass vitamin C on to her baby in the course of nursing. If the baby is bottle-fed, it is imperative that the vitamin C be supplied by supplementation, and especially if the milk is pasteurized or sterilized before it is given to the infant.

"... it seems to me that the guiding forces of procreation are the mineral elements and iodine."

When I was a medical student at the Johns Hopkins University in the early 1930s, scurvy in infants was a constant condition, but it was not recognized until Dr. Edwards A. Park diagnosed it from the hemorrhages occurring between the bone and the periosteum. The periosteum is the skin covering the bone that contains the cells that produce bone tissue.

The babies would scream with pain when one would touch the bones of their arms and legs, where these hemorrhages had separated the periosteum from the bone. Dr. Park showed that this could be completely eliminated by feeding the babies fresh orange juice as a source of vitamin C. Later he also showed that cod-liver oil, which contains vitamin D, would eliminate the rickets of the growing child. He is properly honored for his great contribution to the health and development of all infants.

Immediately upon my arrival at the Natural Living Convention I was told that the Amish girls who were present all had false teeth — both upper and lower plates. This came as a great surprise to me, because I was under the impression that this sect had separated itself

from the mainstream of society in order to live in the best possible way — using only natural food, undiluted by the various chemicals of preservation that we find in other walks of life.

I stopped a young woman in Amish dress and asked her if it was true that all the young women of the Amish sect had lost their teeth by the time they were 20, and even before they had a baby. She agreed that this was true, and she added that the men were not much better.

About this time a group of Amish men walked by and I was amazed to see their front teeth look like they were ragged on the sides and edges, stained a peculiar brownish color, and many of them missing. I was unable to talk with them at that time, hoping that in the future I might have some personal contact to find out more about their problem.

The young lady whom I had been talking with informed me that she had been sent from the Indiana sect to the Lancaster sect, to intermarry in the hope that this would help slow this devastating pattern of their health.

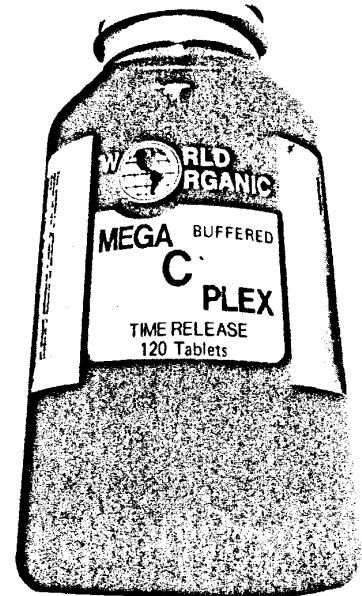
"... vitamin C is manufactured in tremendous quantity in all forms of life except in four species ..."

She further stated that many of the babies that were born to them were in trouble, mentally as well as physically. She also said it was considered that this entire pattern was of genetic origin. I told her that I did not believe this was true — that most of their problem was due to their nutrition — a subject I would be discussing in my lecture. She informed me that the large attendance of these Amish men and women was due to their interest in my subject.

Since then I have tried to contact the Amish with the hope of learning something more about their problem, but have not been able to obtain an audience with them. I understand by hearsay that the ge-

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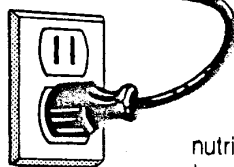
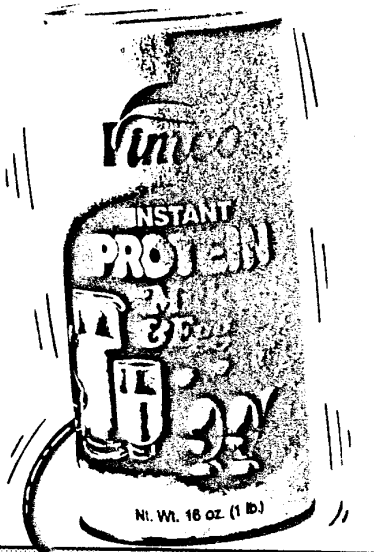
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netic approach is being investigated by some scientists from a medical school. I was asked at one time that if I were allowed to do anything for them, would I proceed by natural food only. I said "No," that it would have to be by some supplementation, that the seriousness of the condition had developed too far. It may be because of this statement (that I would have to use supplementation) that my offer was rejected.

Eighteen months ago the grandmother of a baby boy asked me if I could offer some help to her grandchild. It seemed that from the time of its birth the baby had suffered cramps and would scream day and night. The pediatrician kept it sedated with phenobarbital and tried in every way to relieve its abdominal distress. The grandmother told me that at the time of its christening the baby was sound asleep from its sedation. I never did see the baby, but was appraised of its condition by the grandmother.

It seemed to me from her description that the baby was having spasms of the pyloric valve at the opening of the stomach into the intestine, as well as spasms of the colon. The pyloric spasm produces pain in the upper part of the abdomen and lower chest, while a

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spasm of the colon produces pain below the navel in the lower abdomen. I suggested that the baby be given zinc ion granules; and at the end of two months all of the pain stopped abruptly.

The mother of the child said it was like a miracle the way it ended. From that time on the child has had no abdominal cramps of any kind. The baby had sweaty hands and feet and would have body sweats at night. The zinc ions

stopped all the excessive sweats. This child also had other symptoms of an allergic nature. He was allergic to the food he ate, and frequently caused diarrhea and indigestion. He reacted to dog hair and other allergens in his environment. He had a constant stuffy nose, which ran all the time. His pediatrician diagnosed the condition as an *allergic rhinitis*.

Interestingly enough, the father of the child was troubled with an allergic condition also for most of his life. Because of the father's long-standing allergy it was considered that the child had inherited the condition from the father. The father had been under a desensitization treatment, which consisted of taking shots of extracts of various materials to which he had been allergic over the years. It was thought that the baby would eventually come to this type of treatment, but the pediatrician suggested that it be delayed until he was at least two years old. The mother asked if I could recommend anything that might help this allergic condition of her baby.

I told the mother that there was nothing I knew of a specific natural remedy but it seemed to me that this child should be given every opportunity to have a good base of minerals and iodine just from a common sense point of view, because at the moment of his birth he had been in trouble with abdominal cramps, which had responded to zinc.

It therefore seemed to me that the entire spectrum of minerals should be supplied as a daily supplement to his food. After taking "Mineral 72," (See "An M.D. Reveals The Powers In Minerals," Jan. 1978) one heaping teaspoon each day in water or orange juice and one-third of a drop of iodine each day for several months, I received the following note from the mother dated February 8, 1980:

"Dear Dr. Myers, Something wonderful has happened to my son, Brendan. Since last November his allergies seem to be suddenly under control! As of this week he is able to eat any food without having an allergic reaction. His asthma is gone, his cough is gone and his runny nose is gone!! In the past, visiting Mom and Dad I

been difficult for Brendan. Dog hair caused him to become terribly congested and asthmatic. Today he is a different child. Thank you so much for all of your help. Brendan will continue to take the "Mineral 72" and iodine through the years to come. Sincerely yours, Rebie."

One of the commonest things we see as physicians is some sort of allergic response to many things in a child's environment. The medical literature is replete with thousands of reports describing these cases. The standard procedure is some form of desensitization. It has been my experience that what is often called an "allergy" is really a chemical imbalance. When this imbalance of chemistry is recognized and corrected, the allergic symptoms disappear. This case that I have just described is the youngest child I have ever seen respond to chemical supplementation, but I have seen many others, some starting around 10 to 12 years of age, have dramatic response to this supportive treatment and require no specific allergic desensitization thereafter.

It is my feeling that the plight of the Amish people that I described in a previous paragraph would respond in exactly the same way to supportive minerals and iodine, along with supplementary vitamins — especially vitamin C, the weakest link. It would require a long time, with much concentrated effort and TLC.

"... if the baby's taste buds are perverted with sweet foods, it is almost impossible to get it to accept natural tasting food."

It is my conclusion from my years of experience that every child from birth should receive an adequate supply of minerals and vitamins, and especially vitamin C — either from its mother's nursing, or from a bottle formula. If the baby is fed a bottle formula I recommend

the addition of autolyzed yeast, one heaping teaspoonful per day, (see "Well-Fed And Ill-Nourished," March, 1980) and one heaping teaspoonful of "Mineral 72" powder, along with the supplementary vitamin C and a vitamin and mineral formula for infants. These materials can be easily divided among the bottles containing the baby's formula for a day.

Assuming the baby will get six bottles a day, you may place six tablespoonsful of water in a container and add the total day's supply of the vitamins, minerals and autolyzed yeast. Place this mixture in the refrigerator and add one tablespoonful to each bottle of formula *after* it has been sterilized and cooled, ready to give to the baby. It must not be placed in the bottle during the sterilization time. Also, by feeding the same flavored material in each bottle, the baby does not get disturbed by a change of taste.

Once the baby becomes adjusted to the rich flavor of the autolyzed yeast it is almost impossible to feed it sweet things. However, if the baby's taste buds are perverted with sweet foods, it is almost impossible to get it to accept natural tasting food.

Many formulas and vitamin drops are sweetened with sugar to get the baby to accept them. This is completely wrong. This procedure perverts the baby's taste for everything else it eats.

If the mother nurses the baby, she should take an adequate supply of vitamins and minerals as a supplement to her own diet, along with iodine, and this will come out in her breast milk. It is usually impossible to get sufficient vitamin C and so I recommend the supplementation of the breast milk with vitamin C — as much as 500 milligrams a day. After a year, I believe the baby should be given 500 milligrams twice a day. It is nothing short of remarkable to see the benefit that this supplementation gives the baby.

It is important to point out at this time that the complete knowledge of a perfect, balanced diet is not yet within our grasp. It is for this reason that such natural foods as yeast and minerals from the silt of a riverbed give us elements of nutri-

tion that contribute to the good health of a baby in ways that are still unknown to us. The necessary modification of our diet to allow time for its distribution and to prevent it from spoiling in transit causes a certain amount of deterioration. The things that are recommended in this paper are supplements only, to bring back the modified food to approximate nature's plan.

"If the mother nurses the baby, she should take an adequate supply of vitamins and minerals as a supplement . . ."

The chemistry of health was studied by Roger J. Williams, Ph.D. one of the great chemists of our time. He devoted much of his research to the biological chemistry of nutrition, and in the course of his studies discovered the B vitamin pantothenic acid. This is one of the most important vitamins in the Krebs' Cycle-of-Energy in the cell. In a paper entitled "Nutrition For Chemists" he states and quote:

"The list of raw materials we need from our environment is a long one, and the list is large, what nutrition is all about. We need calcium ions, phosphate ions, sodium ions, potassium ions, chloride ions, magnesium ions, ferric ions, ferrous ions, zinc ions, manganese ions, copper ions, cobalt ions, molybdenum ions, iodine, leucine, isoleucine, valine, methionine, threonine, phenylalanine, chlorophyll, some form of vitamin A, some form of vitamin D, some form of vitamin E, some form of vitamin K, vitamin C, thiamine, riboflavin, pantothenate, niacinamide, biotin, folic acid, pyridoxine and vitamin B12.

"Unbelievable as it may seem, we need all of these elements every day (or every two days), or we suffer. Furthermore, there is excellent evidence that all of the elements listed

constitute absolute needs. If we fail to get them and run out of our reserves, we will surely die. It gives one an odd feeling to realize that your very existence depends every day on the practical solution of an equation with 40 or more variables."

As long as this list may seem to you it is still incomplete, and new elements are continuing to be discovered to add to the list, such as selenium, tin, silver, chromium, silicon, vanadium, etc. — and so the list grows as time passes and our research improves.

One of the most indisputable adages of time is that gem of philosophy expressed in the statement:

"NO CHAIN IS STRONGER THAN ITS WEAKEST LINK."

Here we have the chain of health constantly dependent on at least 40 or more specialized links. These links are so intertwined and interdependent it is very difficult to show clearly how much and to what degree each one contributes to our state of health. Some in lowest concentration — called trace elements, such as iodine — affect the body in most remarkable ways and cause great illness when in short supply. Some have a wide range of tolerance and produce only mild discomfort. There are no tests available at present to make the decision of requirement an easy one. The best tool of measurement of health improvement is therapeutic testing.

As I pointed out in the beginning of this paper, the greatest miracle of life is the embryology of birth. However, the nutritional support of life after birth is the miracle of metabolism and growth. Without the proper balance of the elements of nutrition, this miracle of growth will not develop into the perfection we all so anxiously hope and pray for.

One of the saddest moments of our lives is to have the obstetrician tell us he has delivered a congenitally damaged baby, when we were in ecstasy awaiting a perfect one. It behooves us to see that all women from birth are treated as potential mothers and nourished constantly so that the "soil of life" will be prepared to receive the "seed of life" at the propitious time. □

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