Sales Pitch for Linseed Oil

Editor:

Your publication performs an important service in allowing the free expression of ideas in medicine and related subjects. Many publications, contrary to the spirit of science, "protect" their readers from improper ideas. Too many publications are actually protecting their advertising revenue by rejecting criticism of certain drugs or food supplements. Industries with annual profits in the billions of dollars have the power to control medical journals, professors of medicine, and public opinion. *TLfD* is one of the few publications which has allowed criticism of the idea that our diet should be supplemented with the essential fatty acids.

The article in your December issue by Mike Minarsich, and the book review excerpt by J.S. Bland, Ph.D. call for some special criticism. Minarsich is obviously a linseed oil salesman (president of New Dimensions Distributors), and he takes his pseudo-facts right out of the book by Udo Erasmus, so my comments are mainly about the Erasmus book, and some of its ideas which are derived from the "scientific work" of Johanna Budwig.

Dr. Bland's review excerpt says "*Fats and Oils* is filled with interesting and accurate information..." and "is the first complete guide to *everything* you need to know about fats, oils and cholesterol to make the right food choices for your health." T.H. Huxley said that book reviewers too often get all their information on the subject from the book being reviewed, like the Abyssinian who supposedly took his steaks from the same ox he was riding; but it is hard for me to believe that Bland has really read this error-filled, incompetent, and possibly deliberately misleading book. If Udo Erasmus is a hired commercial writer working from information provided by his employer, then he has done a smoothly competent writing job, and it is the publisher who misleads by failing to give some background information. Judging by the book, I suspect that neither Erasmus nor Budwig has studied the fundamentals of organic chemistry. That isn't important. But it is very important that linoleic acid, and related oils, in the amounts recommended by Udo Erasmus, are known to cause:

impaired brain development and learning;
damage to skin and bones;
accelerated aging and age-pigment accumulation;
damage to the circulatory system;
increased cancer incidence;
suppressed immunity;
endocrine dysfunction.

U.S. consumption of seed oils had been almost doubling every decade since the first world war, but the technological advances of the 1960s which allowed paints to be made from petroleum derivatives, rather than from linseed oil, safflower and soy oil, stimulated the redirection of large amounts of these substances from paint production into the food market. Clever marketing tricks are in some cases creating price mark-ups of 10,000%. I spoke to a dealer who said he recognized the toxicity of linseed oil and wouldn't use it himself, but that the profit was so big he was going to keep selling it.

An acquaintance who died recently after several months of eating large amounts of linseed oil told me that it had been used by both W.F. Koch, M.D. and Max Gerson, M.D. I knew this wasn't true: For example, Gerson's program evolved from a diet for migraine and tuberculosis into a cancer therapy, and involved the use of thyroid extract, liver, fresh juices, and a little butter, but over and over he said "absolutely no oil." My friend sent me a page from Gerson's book, containing the recommendation for 1 tablespoon of linseed oil. My copy of the Gerson book, published while he was alive, contains no such statement on that page, but rather the phrase in bold capital letters, NO OILS! My informant also assured me that Gerson had known Budwig and respected her work. Gerson's book contains detailed discussions of all the main dietary approaches to cancer, with a large number of references to the scientific literature, and it did not mention Budwig at all. Since Budwig's proposals are diametrically opposed to Gerson's he would have had to account for them if he had known of them.

The people who are using Max Gerson's name and reputation to sell linseed oil are harming the people they mislead, and are dishonoring Gerson's important work. The altered book is going to boggle the mind of any thoughtful student who tries to understand what Gerson was really doing.

Minarsich and Erasmus similarly invoke the names of several great biochemists in making their sales pitch for linseed oil. Any serious student of biochemistry will recognize the absurdity of their outline of biochemistry, but the average reader is likely to swallow the idea that Ms. Budwig represents the culmination of a century of scientific progress. Dale Alexander made a career of the idea that cod liver oil will grease arthritic joints. Now a generation

➤

later, the vast food oil industry has a slightly higher class of sales promoters. It is urgent that we start developing a more critical medical-scientific culture.

Research showing the toxic effects of unsaturated oils goes back more than 60 years. A 1985 article published in my newsletter cites some of the key references. These substances inhibit many enzymes (e.g., in digestion, in immunity, in clot removal, in thyroid function), they disrupt mitochondrial energy production, and they interfere with communication between cells. We hear very little about these toxic effects, and there is not much money available for more research in these areas. Naturally, these topics aren't mentioned in the Erasmus book. The "toxicity" questions treated in the book do not include the toxicity of fresh and natural unsaturated oils, and so they have the function of a red herring, distracting the reader.

For nearly 20 years, mainline medicine has advocated the use of unsaturated oils "to protect the heart." A few scientists, like Hans Selye, kept telling the (contrary) truth. Now big business has many people in "alternative medicine" falling for the false establishment story.

Reference:

Ray Peat's Newsletter, "Interactive Toxicities of Unsaturated Oils and Iron," 1985, 41.

Raymond Peat, Ph.D.
P.O. Box 3427
Eugene, Oregon 97403

Streptococcus Faecium Not Faecalis

Editor:

Here are some comments concerning acidophilus products and *L. acidophilus*.

We believe that it is true that acidophilus products for human use were, in the past, mostly *Lactobacillus casei*, ssp. *rhamnosus*, especially in European countries. Today, a large percentage of products of lactic bacteria for human use contain two or more species of lactobacilli, bifidobacteria and streptococci. That is the result of newer knowledge of the lactic flora of the intestinal tract. It is now known that normal intestinal flora contains, per gram of feces, billions of bifidobacteria and millions of lactobacilli and streptococci.

Most important species of bifidobacteria found in the intestinal tract are *Bifidobacterium infantis, B. adolescentis, B. longum, B. brevis* and *B. bifidum*. Lactobacilli include mainly *Lactobacillus casei*, ssp. *rhamnosus, L. fermentum, L. acidophilus* and *L. salivarius*. *L. bulgaricus* and *L. lactis* are not adapted to intestinal conditions. They may be found in the intestinal tract when they are regularly ingested in large amount. That is the case of *L. bulgaricus* for yogurt consumers. However, the survival does not exceed 7 to 10 days after heavy and prolonged consumption. Lactic streptococci, especially *S. faecium* and *S. thermophilus*, are normal and highly beneficial inhabitants of the intestines. *S. faecium* is most important for the colonization of the intestinal mucosa, assuring protection of the organism against infection by harmful microorganisms.

Rosell Institute, Inc., the "Montreal-based bulk dairy culture producer," was incorporated in 1934. It was founded by three professors of OKA Agricultural Institute: Dr. J.M. Rosell, Dr. G. Toupin and myself. Rosell Institute Inc. is a Microbiological Institution specializing in the production of microorganisms for the food industry, soil fertilization, human and animal prophylaxis and therapeutics. Its technology and teachings have followed scientific developments.

One of the numerous species of lactobacilli produced by Rosell Institute for human use is *Lactobacillus casei*, ssp. *rhamnosus*. L. rhamnosus is very different from L. casei. Differences concern morphology, physiological characteristics, antibiotic activities and immunological properties. Some strains of L. casei are well adapted to cheese aging. L. rhamnosus is probably the most important species of lactobacilli. It is well adapted to intestinal conditions, has good activity against harmful microbes and contributes to development of immunity. Moreover, it is much more potent, prolific, ubiquitous and efficient than L. acidophilus.

From 1910 to about 1970, lactobacilli isolated from feces or intestinal tract were generally called *Lactobacillus acidophilus*. That name was applied to lactobacilli from intestinal origin used for experimentation with humans and animals. Experimental reports very seldom mention full identity of the concerned lactobacilli. The results were attributed to *L. acidophilus*. How often was it true? When practical and extensive identity tests were available, it appeared that *Lactobacillus acidophilus* products contained almost exclusively *Lactobacillus rhamnosus*. That was the situation in Europe and America. A few products contained *L. fermentum;* one product contained *L. acidophilus*.

Storage Conditions

All species of lactic bacteria have longer life and better stability at low temperature. Our tests on lactobacilli and bifidobacteria, extended over some decades, have shown an average monthly decrease in the number of living cells of 1% under freezing conditions, 2% under refrigeration and 5% at room temperature. These data concern only freeze-dried cultures. Cells of *Streptococcus faecium* are three to four times more resistant than those of lactobacilli and bifidobacteria. Consequently, it is important to store lactic cultures at low temperatures as much as possible.

Good stability requires also low moisture content. Lactic cultures must be packed in air and moisture-proof containers.

Mix of microorganisms

In the intestinal tract, there is naturally a mixture of several species of lactobacilli, bifidobacteria and lactic streptococci under normal conditions. For several reasons, such normal flora may be partially or almost completely destroyed. It is then very important to re-implant or re-establish that flora for the protection of the organism and prevention of putrefaction and toxicity.

Though one adequate species of lactic bacteria, adapted to intestinal conditions, may be highly beneficial it is more logical to consume several species, provided they grow well together and do not show incompatibility or antibiosis. Aerobic lactobacilli will help anaerobic bifidobacteria by creating better growth conditions and each species may contribute to better nutrition of the whole population. There is such a thing as symbiosis and synergism.

Rosell Institute produces and freeze-dries all the important species of lactobacilli, bifidobacteria and lactic streptococci. It cooperates with nutritionists, doctors and distributors of Health Products to inform them properly and supply them with the mixtures of lactic bacteria that they wish for their specific needs.

"Something dophilus"

It is true that several companies use the word "dophilus" in their brand names.