

Helping alcoholics to stop drinking; Literature Review and Commentary

BYLINE: Gaby, Alan R.

SECTION: Pg. 33(2) No. 282 ISSN: 1525-4283

LENGTH: 462 words

One hundred alcoholic patients, 60% of whom had failed one or more alcohol treatment programs, underwent a six-week outpatient program that combined biochemical interventions with rational-emotive therapy. Each patient had a six-hour glucose tolerance test and diet analysis. Food allergies were assessed by a four-day fast, followed by individual food challenges. Abnormal glucose metabolism was seen in 92% of the patients, and food allergy was found in 73%. The most common allergenic foods were wheat (58%), milk (50%), beef (22%), corn (22%), eggs (14%), and peanuts (14%). Of 80 patients tested, 70% had chemical sensitivities, 84% were sensitive to hydrocarbons (natural gas, gasoline, petroleum products), and 23% reacted to cigarettes.

Dietary changes included elimination of refined sugar, caffeine, nicotine, white flour, "junk foods," and reactive foods and chemicals. Allergies were treated by avoidance and use of desensitizing drops. Supplements included sodium ascorbate (initial dose, 4-5 g every three hours, modified according to response or bowel tolerance), evening primrose oil (Efamol, six capsules per day), and glutamine (1 g threetimes per day, or higher doses if cravings persisted). Additional vitamins, minerals, essential fatty acids, and amino acids were given when suggested by laboratory results. The dosages of various nutrients were reduced as the patients improved. Regular exercise was required, with a minimum of four 30-minute sessions per week. Nystatin was recommended when symptoms suggested candidiasis. Eighty-five percent of the patients reported themselves as "abstinent and stable" at 12 and 42 months post-treatment. Symptoms typically seen in many abstinent alcoholics, including alcohol craving, depression, emotional lability, and confusion, were significantly reduced or eliminated during the first six weeks of treatment.

Comment: Most alcohol treatment programs have a high failure rate. The 85% success rate reported in this study is therefore noteworthy, especially considering the fact that 60% of the subjects had already failed one or more treatment programs. The successful program described above included a comprehensive approach to improving each person's metabolism, as well as a behavior-based form of psychotherapy. It is likely that many different components of the program contributed to the positive results. In my experience, alcohol craving can be reduced by many of the interventions used at this treatment center, including controlling hypoglycemia, avoiding allergens, supplementing with glutamine and vitamin B3, and treating suspected candidiasis with antifungal medication.

Mathews-Larson J, Parker RA. Alcoholism treatment with biochemical restoration as a major component. *Int J Biosocial Res.* 1987;9(1):92-106.

LOAD-DATE: January 13, 2007

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

ACC-NO: 157081490

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Magazine

JOURNAL-CODE: OISW ASAP

Copyright 2007 Gale Group, Inc.

All Rights Reserved

ASAP

Copyright 2007 The Townsend Letter Group