

# DO NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS

**I was brought up on a farm in the heart of Devon, with a real emphasis on locally produced, fresh and in season fruit and vegetables, and home grown, organic beef, lamb and chicken, using the proven method of rotation farming. We wanted nothing else, and certainly no processed, convenience food from countries thousands of miles away.**

Now 50 years later we face a totally different scenario with the ease of imported, processed and factory produced food available on the ever expanding supermarket shelves.

My concern has been the rapid decline of minerals and trace elements in the soil due to intensive, repetitious single crop farming and destruction of the mycorrhiza layer in the surface of the soil with no replacement of the essential nutrients which leaves our food calorie rich but trace element and mineral bankrupt. Increasing use of pesticides, herbicides and fungicides are strangling the purity of our food and destroying the ability to produce the antioxidant capacity of our food required to combat the growing tide of free radicals which attack every one of our cells with impunity.

Our innate immune system demands these minerals and trace elements to function efficiently and effectively. In particular selenium, iron and zinc, important in the reparative process.

## A DIFFERENT PHILOSOPHY

Over the past 20 years of endodontic practice I have seen the gradual increase in use of antibiotics and the decline in their effectiveness. To combat the growing tide of resistance, we have to approach the treatment of root canal and periodontal disease using a different philosophy.

Using a balanced combination of trace



**YES**

**Alan Holland**  
is the principal endodontic specialist at the Bristol Endodontic Clinic. Over the past 20 years, Alan has expanded his interest in complementary medicine, particularly in the field of wholefood supplementation as an adjunct to allopathic medicine and a more holistic approach to treating his patients

element and mineral supplements with 100% bioavailability will redress the chronic lack of innate immune support required to combat the oral disease processes which recent research indicates also has an effect on degenerative heart disease and pre-term birth with small baby syndrome. There may well be effects on other organs which as yet have not been identified and treatment of the chronic dietary deficiencies resulting in faster, more effective and complete healing of oral lesions without the use of antibiotics is now a real possibility.

I always encourage a balanced diet of nuts, beans, seeds, pulses, locally produced, fresh, in season fruit, vegetables and meat. The supplement regime I use is there to support and optimise the immune system in conjunction with healthy eating.

## 100% BIOAVAILABLE WHOLEFOODS

The Wholefood Multi with CoQ10 and Beta Glucan produced from mineral and trace element enriched hydroponically grown brassicas is 100% bioavailable. Because it is a wholefood, the body can assimilate all the necessary components. This balanced and enriched diet encourages speedy healing of often large and long standing root canal infections which have resulted in extensive chronic infection in the bone beyond the apex of the root. With the addition of further Beta Glucan, an immune system primer, and a highly concentrated antioxidant (to combat the free radical load) most patients notice an improvement in their general health and clinically I see a rapid healing of root canal abscess.

## COMPLEMENTING DIETARY DEFICIENCIES

I continue to be delighted and amazed by the simple logic of supportive supplementation using natural products, which positively complement the deficiencies in our diet without the use of antibiotics or drugs. I would not feel comfortable treating a patient for a disease which potentially has life threatening complications without giving the option of supplementation in preference to antibiotics, which have their place in acute medicine and should not be disregarded, but should be reserved for those moments of acute crisis.

We still do not know the full extent of the detrimental effects root canal and periodontal disease can have on the body, which may be revealed by further research in the future. In the meantime, I shall continue to offer my patients the option to improve their potential for healing by improving their diet and supporting it with this Dentavital balanced, optimising supplement regime.

# HAVE A PLACE IN DENTISTRY?

**E** Having been a GDP for the last 18 years and an avid believer in dietary supplements for general health, I can see no direct link between dietary supplementation and dental wellbeing. If you eat a balanced diet, your body will receive the vitamins, minerals and antioxidants that it needs.

Where there is an inadequacy of the person's uptake of vitamins in their general diet for medical reasons, these adjuncts are necessary. But whether they improve oral health is debatable.

Being a great believer in – and personally taking vast amounts of – Co-enzyme Q10, vitamin C, vitamin B Complex, Glucosamine and Chondroitin Sulphate, I would quite happily state that the placebo effect gained from taking these supplements far outweighs the implied necessity and benefits. A perfect example of this is if you take over 500mg of ascorbic acid (vitamin C) in tablet form. Anything above 500mg will be excreted in your urine. The 500mg can be obtained from citrus fruits, broccoli and even potatoes. So why should we pay for the privilege of passing things straight through our bodies which have done us no more good?

## SOMETIMES NATURE ISN'T BEST

As for the 'organic' vs 'non-organic' argument: I find it hard to believe (or swallow) that the organic route is any better than lab-synthesised. I feel that too many people have jumped on the organic bandwagon and people must realise that sometimes nature isn't best; that mass produced may be just as good. The example I'd use for this is lab-produced vaccines. Imagine if we had to produce vaccines organically? We'd all be dead!

I do commend the organic believers among us, but when they've got a



**James Garritt**  
qualified in 1993 from Liverpool Dental School. He has worked solely in the NHS since then. He was responsible for creating a purpose-built surgery, working and having an excellent relationship with his local PCT. This was one of the first practices to go PDS. James now works alongside Tracey Bell to build a dentistry brand.

headache, do they take a couple of paracetamol or some homebrew herb concoction?

People go on about the overuse of amoxicillin. And a number of patients now report allergies to penicillin. In the vast majority of cases, however, these patients are not allergic and I urge them to go and be properly tested. True allergies have very severe, often life-threatening, reactions. I always ask these patients to consider that in the event of a serious accident, where they're rushed to hospital in an emergency, would they rather have a limb removed or put up with a bit of a rash from a slight penicillin reaction.

There is now a perception that antibiotics are being overprescribed, reducing their potency and efficacy. And

this is of course true. But would any sane dentist not prescribe at the mere hint of an abscess – be it aerobic or anaerobic in make up?

As dentists, we are here to stop infection, not to spread it. What's needed is correct education and understanding of the limitations of specific antibiotics, rather than just blanket prescribing. I'm amazed at the number of occasions I've seen dentists – and doctors – prescribing the wrong antibiotic for the condition that's presented.

## A GREAT CONCEPT IN THEORY

Supplements such as CoQ10 do increase the number of mitochondria in each cell thus, supposedly, producing more energy to fight infection. This concept is great in theory, but there is no clinical evidence that it improves oral health. We must start with the basics by getting our patients' approach to oral health right first before we even think about giving supplements to help the health of the oral tissues.

I really feel that using supplements - be they organic or non organic - will not make a jot of difference to our patients' periodontal condition, as there is no way on earth they will ever make a difference to the teeth themselves once formed and erupted. I say, let's keep the supplements confined to our general health and not to specific structures.

It's not like you see many people with scurvy while you're out shopping now is it? Even though a substantial percentage of the population don't even bother to eat oranges. In my view, it's a great marketing ploy to sell us stuff that we don't really need. As are many of the supplements we buy.



Do you recommend supplements to your patients, or feel that should be their choice? Let us know on: [comments@ppdentistry.com](mailto:comments@ppdentistry.com)