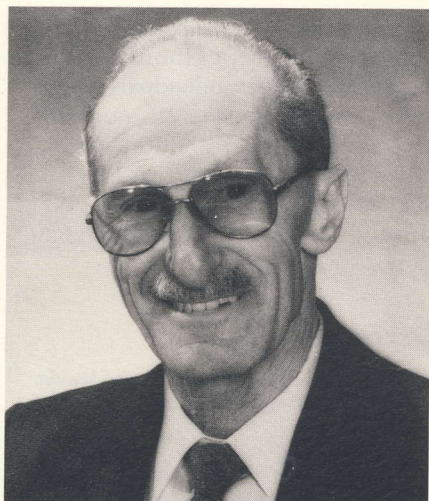


Acne and Foods – Dr G Borok



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Curriculum vitae

Dr Borok has been in both rural and urban family practice for 35 years. In 1983, after reading Dr M Mandell's book "5 Day allergy relief system", he went to America to learn the techniques used by Mandell in his clinic in Norwalk Connecticut. For the last 5 years he has used an elimination programme to research the relief of irritable bowel syndrome and all chronic symptoms of all systems of the body, associated with the removal of foods from patients. He had read papers and presented posters on foods in relation to moods, asthma, migraine, IBS, hypertension and behaviour at various congresses. He has held a part time appointment at the post coronary rehabilitation programme at the Sports Research Centre, University of Pretoria for 12 years.

Summary

This patient study shows the relief of severe acne, and also asthma, Irritable Bowel Syndrome symptoms, muscular and joint pains by using a well-planned programme in an elimination diet, without any drugs. It stresses the association of foods to the systems of the body, giving detailed information about his acne problem.

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KEYWORDS:

Acne; Diet therapy; Food.

The patient, a 27 year old male, whose symptoms of ulcerative colitis cleared by using an elimination diet (ED) to identify and remove foods related to his symptoms, suffered from severe pustulo-nodulo-cystic acne for 13 years.¹ Besides the bowel symptoms he also suffered from skin, nasal, respiratory and emotional symptoms for many years. A continual blocked nose, wheezing more often than not, generalised muscular aches and shivers, lack of confidence, horrible looking pustular nodules on his face and always tired, he was extremely depressed.

Before going on the ED he suffered from severe acne for 13 years. His face, arms and back were full of pustular nodulo-cystic lesions as seen in Fig 1. The recurrent boils on his face and back have made him shy and he does not swim. Over the years he has been treated with all the standard remedies without improvement. He had used skin rinses, detergents, local antibiotic lotions, retinoids and long term tetracyclines with only

temporary relief. He had been taking isotretinoin for 3 months without any help just before going onto the elimination diet (ED).

With such varied symptoms he was given the impression he was neurotic and often advised by various doctors to pull himself together, think positively and many of his symptoms would improve.

The Elimination Diet

This consists of a preplanned programme where he had a different fruit, vegetable, grain and protein daily, one item per meal and no food item was repeated in the week. Water was the only fluid and salt the only condiment allowed. He was seen weekly when "bad foods" related to symptoms were removed and replaced by other foods. So called "good foods" were repeated until his symptoms cleared.

After only 5 weeks on the ED, his bowel symptoms, asthma and acne responded dramatically and have remained so for 2 years now.

The improvement of the acne is shown in Fig 2, taken 6 months after eliminating refined foods. He has had no therapy at all since on the diet for bowel, asthma or acne.

The bowel symptoms were related to pineapple, beef, cucumber, and cottage cheese.¹ The improvement of the acne was related to sugars, as when sugars were reintroduced his acne flared up.

Discussion

Mandell in his book describes cases of eczema, acne, irritable bowel syndrome, joint pains, muscular

... Acne and foods

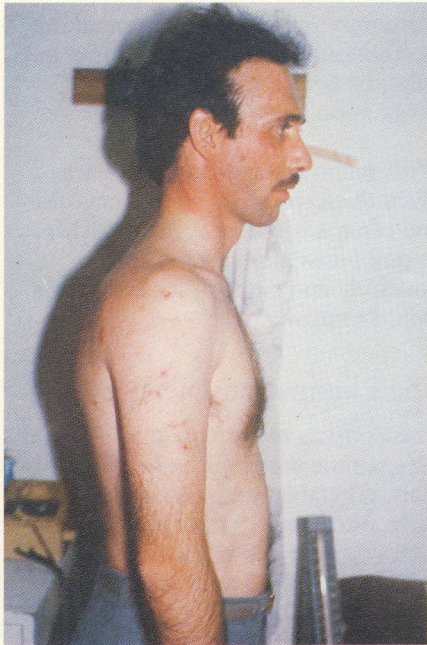


Fig 1 Showing the right side of the patient with pustular cysts on face and right arm.

aches, psychological symptoms, and asthma related to foods.² The association of foods to all systems of the body is well described by a joint committee of the Royal College of Physicians and British Nutrition Foundation.³

This case clearly shows the relief of acne, asthma, IBS symptoms, muscular pains, joint pains by the elimination of a variety of foods from the diet of the patient.

The author suggests foods may play a role in acne in two possible ways.

Firstly, atopy was a prominent feature in this case. Atopy is associated with oedema, which may have blocked the pores of the sebaceous glands with pustular formation.

Secondly, the highly refined foods, sugars, cakes, chocolates and pastas lead to a high blood glucose level with an insulin response by the body. The insulin stores the sugars as glycogen and then as cholesterol^{4,5}.

He was often given the impression that he was neurotic

When cholesterol stores are full, it is deposited as fat droplets.⁶ This may increase the viscosity of the sebum in the sebaceous glands, not allowing it to flow easily out of the pores and subsequent nodules, cysts and abscess formation by the skin flaura.

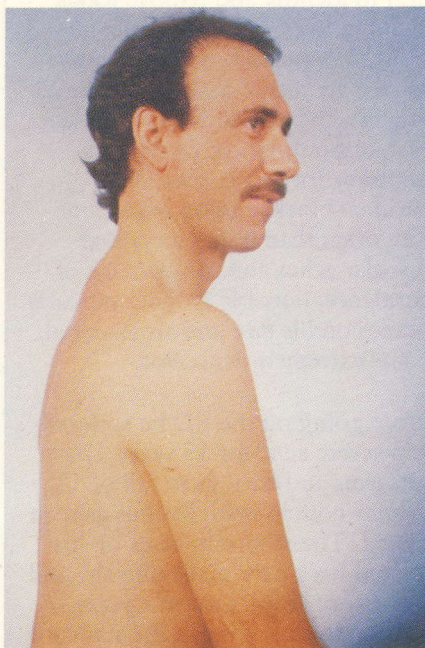


Fig 2 Showing the improvement of the acne with only scars being seen on the right side and arms.

The elimination of the highly refined foods from the diet of those unfortunate atopic individuals who suffer from severe pustular, nodulocystic acne may be a solution, as shown in this case. This may save them years of expensive, useless and harmful therapy which is the present vogue.

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