

Orthomolecular Medicine for Everyone

Megavitamin Therapeutics for Families and Physicians

by Abram Hoffer, PhD, MD, FRCP(C) and Andrew Saul, PhD,

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Megavitamin therapeutics? Whazzat? Do vital amines have health-restoring capabilities? In this book, two highly-qualified authors, Abram Hoffer, PhD, MD and Andrew Saul, PhD explain how orthomolecular medicine can help people feel better and live longer. In Part One, Dr. Hoffer (biochemist, physician and psychiatrist-retired) and Dr. Saul (health educator) teach us that: (1) vitamins and minerals are important to human health; (2) nutritional deficiencies can cause health problems; (3) many patients can restore their health by taking supplements; and (4) healing with nutrients only happens if each patient receives optimal doses (much higher than anti-starvation levels). After introducing the concepts of nutritional deficiencies and dependencies and biochemical individuality, the authors outline the healing capabilities of vitamins, starting with B-3, an essential nutrient which has three names: nicotinic acid, niacin and niacinamide. Then Hoffer and Saul explain how orthomolecular doctors treat chronic illnesses and maintain health by prescribing regimens of vitamins A, B, C, D and E with trace minerals and other nutrients.

Part Two details safe, effective and restorative orthomolecular treatments for nine health problems:

- (1) gastrointestinal disorders, (2) cardiovascular disease, (3) arthritis, (4) cancer, (5) the aging brain,
- (6) psychiatric and behavioral disorders, (7) epilepsy and Huntington's disease,
- (8) allergies, infections, toxic reactions, trauma, lupus and multiple sclerosis and (9) skin problems.

Will a poor diet drain our vitality? If we get sick, can nutrients restore our health? Consider mental illness; most psychiatrists quickly label patients, prescribe combinations of meds (antidepressants, antipsychotics and anticonvulsants, etc.) and talk to their psychoses. Non-responsive patients get electric shocks. Early in his career, Dr. Hoffer saw very few recoveries after patients got labels, meds, talks or shocks. He wondered whether psychotic patients might have metabolic disorders rather than neuroleptic deficiencies. Most doctors don't pay any mind if patients eat junk food or self-medicate with alcohol, oblivious to the reality that brain cells need decent food. Certain nutrients are essential. Psychiatrists don't often consider nutrition but Abram Hoffer went to the old school which taught doctors to assess root causes and contributing factors before making a differential diagnosis. As Hoffer evaluated biochemical and nutritional factors underlying psychosis, he discovered that foods and nutrients can affect mental health. Over his long and distinguished career, Dr. Hoffer fine-tuned patients' diets and prescribed regimens of vitamins, trace minerals, amino acids, antioxidants, energy and enzyme cofactors. These treatments helped many of his patients to stop hallucinating, rejoin their communities, work, pay taxes and live well. Impossible, you say?

Initially, Dr. Hoffer networked with a small team of scientists and health professionals who cooperated to research and develop restorative treatments for schizophrenia. Linus Pauling, PhD, read *Niacin Therapy*, in which Hoffer reported his first patients who recovered taking niacin for acute schizophrenia. Pauling named it "orthomolecular psychiatry" (*Science*, 1968). Dr. Hoffer explains the *restorative* dimension of care: "The practice of orthomolecular medicine recognizes that diseases are due to a metabolic fault that is correctable in most patients by good nutrition, including the use of vitamins and mineral supplements."

Megavitamin therapeutics proved safe and effective. Many of Hoffer's acute schizophrenia patients recovered taking optimum doses of a methyl acceptor (B-3, niacin or niacinamide) with an antioxidant (C, ascorbic acid). For more than 50 years, while researching and developing regimens of nutrients to heal psychosis and other mental disorders, Hoffer reported clinical progress and success by improving diets and giving medicinal doses of vitamins B-3, B-6, C, zinc and manganese. Thousands of patients recovered.

Most psychiatrists ignored Hoffer's double-blind placebo-controlled gold-standard research. Without studying his ideas, experiments, data or findings, 'modern' psychiatrists dismissed Hoffer's reports of a 75% recovery rate for acute schizophrenia. They did not interview his recovered patients. Believing that thousands of patients and their trusting families could benefit from complementary vitamins and minerals, Abram Hoffer somehow found the time to write more than 30 books and 600 medical journal articles and editorials. For decades, he wrote about the biochemistry of schizophrenia, described the healing capabilities of vitamins and other nutrients, recommended

healthy diets and introduced orthomolecular medicine to patients, families, caregivers and health professionals. Hoffer's books include *The Chemical Basis of Clinical Psychiatry* (1960), *Niacin Therapy in Psychiatry* (1962), *How to Live with Schizophrenia* (1966), *The Hallucinogens* (1967), *Smart Nutrients* (1980) *Orthomolecular Medicine for Physicians* (1989), and *Adventures in Psychiatry* (2005). This 2008 book, clear enough for every reader, is a classic example of Hoffer's thorough research, detailed references, careful observations and thoughtful writing.

While prescribing vitamins for patients, Hoffer took the same daily doses of niacin and ascorbic acid himself (vitamins B-3 and C). How many psychiatrists self-test their treatments? He experienced the niacin flush with two brief side effects: 1. warmth and 2. redness. He had no side attacks or toxic effects while taking vitamins, only side benefits. Abram Hoffer's decades-long personal experiment shows that the right doses of the right nutrients can help a doctor feel better and live longer. Will you live as long as Dr. Hoffer if you take vitamins B-3 and C? Maybe you will; note that Dr. Hoffer wrote this book in his 91st year.

Anyone can read about the decades of research, study the references and consider the regimens which Dr. Abram Hoffer and his colleagues developed, tested, healed thousands of patients with, took themselves and wrote clinical success stories about, since the 1950s. Abram Hoffer and Andrew Saul wrote this informative, insightful, helpful and hopeful book to educate the public how we can restore our health, get proper medical care, adjust our diets and take supplements. Hoffer and Saul encourage us to eat foods that we can metabolize, and take nutritional supplements (vitamins, minerals and amino acids, antioxidants, energy and enzyme co-factors and essential fatty acids). If we suffer from metabolic problems, deficiencies or dependencies, we can ask our health professionals to complement standard treatments with nutritional regimens. If our doctors don't know about restorative care, we can ask for second opinions.

As you read this fascinating book, you will learn how to restore health and live well by eating nutritious foods and asking health professionals to recommend nutritional supplements. Ortho-molecular medicine has helped thousands of patients, for decades. Optimum doses of essential nutrients tested safe and effective. You can help yourself recover, feel better and live longer; then tell your friends and families!

review by Robert Sealey, BSc

author of *Finding Care for Depression, Mental Episodes & Brain Disorders*

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[Historical note – Decades before Hoffer's time, malnourished and psychotic patients recovered from episodes of pellagra by taking niacin and tryptophan and improving their diets. Ref. Dr. J. Goldberger. Divided doses of vitamin B-3, as niacinamide, were also used to heal arthritis. Ref. Dr. W. Kaufman. In the 1950s, Dr. Hoffer applied his PhD in biochemistry to research schizophrenia, neurotransmitters and metabolic pathways. One evening he had a Eureka moment spotting a common chemical basis, an indole, in hallucinogenic compounds. He wondered if the human brain produces indoles and if so, might those metabolites cause hallucinations or perceptual distortions during episodes of schizophrenia. Dr. Hoffer found indoles by tracking the metabolic pathways of catecholamines, especially when the oxidation of adrenalin shifts irreversibly to adrenochrome (an indole). 1 or 2% of people, schizophrenics, hallucinate that way. Hoffer tested various doses of niacin and ascorbic acid (vit. B-3 and C) and had more Eureka moments as megavitamin therapeutics restored normal brain function in patients with acute schizophrenia.]