

Iodine

Iodine (in the form of seaweed) has been an important medical treatment for over a thousand years, It was used in thyroid disorders (by Hippocrates), but also used in breast diseases, infections and many other conditions. But then in the 1950s a shadow fell over iodine as research showed it to be toxic to rats. This study was repeated in 2005 by Dr Guy Abraham who found the conclusions to be wrong. He found basic errors in the original research. Dr Abraham was joined by two other extraordinary physicians, Dr David Brownstein and Dr Jorge Flechas who produced a body of evidence about iodine which challenged conventional views. They publicised this but this led to little change. The internet turned this on its head. Internet groups and forums hearing about the impressive results of iodine started using iodine at high doses, following the example of these doctors - typically 50mg daily but sometimes 200 mg daily. Sceptics claimed these doses could be fatal. But experience showed the opposite. These three doctors treated over 4000 patients, using the iodine supplementation protocol which starts with 50mg iodine, often with spectacular results.

Iodine had come of age and just when it was needed. The reason this information was so important was because of bromides and fluorides. Bromides, found in flame-retardants and personal care products have been found in the bodies of everyone, even in breast milk. These displace iodine, stopping it from working properly. Flouride from toothpaste and teflon pans was having similar effects. Many drugs contain fluorides and bromides. This was at a time when breast, ovarian and thyroid disorders were increasing alarmingly. This poisoning by bromides and flourides can be eased or reversed by having enough iodine on board - and few of us do.

I will give some examples of its use.

Thyroid

The thyroid gland produces at least 12 hormones. All depend on iodine.

About a century ago it was common practice to treat hyperthyroidism (overactive thyroid) with iodine. For instance Redisch and Perloff wrote an article "The medical treatment of hyperthroidism in Endocrinology in 1940 and found 88% of patients were cured. Other doctors (Thompson, Thompson & Brailey) in 1930 and Starr, Walcott and Segall in 1924 published similar findings in major medical journals. More

recently in 1970 Wartofsky, Ransil and Ingbar found the same results. But this fell out of favour as surgery, radio-iodine and drugs became standard therapies.

This is a pity as iodine is a very safe substance and it is difficult to overdose on it. At Chernobyl, vast numbers of people were given large doses of iodine to protect their thyroids from cancer. Dr Brownstein comments: "I can state that it is impossible to treat thyroid illness if there is an inadequate level of iodine in the body and this includes auto-immune thyroid disorders".

What we can say is iodine is greatly underused today in thyroid disease.

Breast Disease

Iodine is probably the most effective remedy in fibrocystic breast disease (lumpy breasts) and this maybe an iodine deficiency disorder. We know that rats deprived of iodine get cysts in their breasts.

Iodine has significant anti-cancer effects and Lynne Farrow, author of the Iodine Crisis, saw her own breast cancer shrink and finally disappear after using high-dose iodine (see BreastCancerChoices.org). The book Iodine and Breast cancer by Canadian doctor, David Derry discusses this topic further.

Other Conditions

Other conditions which can respond well to iodine these include fibromyalgia and sometimes Dupuytren's contracture. It can help in polycystic ovary disease. Iodine normalises the ratio of oestrogens in the body. It helps brain function and can be useful in ADHD. Iodide (as opposed iodine) can be useful in COPD, especially where there is excess mucus. The Nobel-prize winning physician Albert Szent-Gyorgyini recalls the saying among physicians of old "if you don't know where, what or why, prescribe ye then K and I".

Iodine and Iodide

In the UK we don't get much iodine in the diet but in Japan the intake is thought to be about 14 mg daily (although recent studies suggest it could be a third of this) which is high (and they have far lower rates of prostate and breast cancer). Lack of sweating can be a clue to iodine deficiency. In the past the most common form of iodine given was Lugol's solution (5% iodine and 10% potassium iodide). It is usually given at a dose of one or two drops daily (which supplies 6.25 and

12.5mg of iodine and iodide). The preparation Iodoral is very similar (5mg iodine 7.5mg potassium iodide). Both are available from Amazon. It should not be taken at night as it is stimulating.

Iodine Dosage

Dr Abraham has said that a dose of up to 12.5mg daily is safe to take without monitoring (mainstream medicine suggest up to 2mg daily). Doses above 12.5mg daily for anything but short-term use need monitoring of thyroid hormones.

Iodine Cream

This is a brilliant remedy for skin infections, including fungal and bacterial infections, nail infections, vaginal infections, cold sores, scabs, warts, verrucas, wounds and bruises. It is not available over the counter but is easy to make yourself.

To make it up: warm 100mls of coconut oil until just melting and then add 10mls of 12% or 15% Lugol's iodine and mix in.

Iodine Deficiency

This is not a test you can get with your GP. But the private lab, Viva Health can measure iodine in your urine.

A crude test is to put a patch of iodine (try Lugol's iodine) on your skin. Ideally put it on a two-inch square patch of skin and cover after 20 minutes. This will leave a brown stain. The quicker it disappears the more likely you are to be deficient. If the brown patch has gone within 18 hours there could be a severe deficiency. Fading or disappearing in 24 hours suggests a mild to moderate deficiency. If a brown patch remains after 24 hours you probably have adequate iodine.

Resources:

The majority of doctors are not taught about iodine and are unaware of its importance of iodine but there are now several good resources. IodineResearch.com covers some of the most important information including that from Dr Guy Abraham, the pioneer and expert on iodine. The views of other experts including Dr Jorge Flechas can be found on the web. The Curezone Iodine Forum is another good source of information. The site BreastCancerChoices.org looks at all the

accumulated data on iodine and breast cancer over the last 50 years. It is also relevant to ovarian and prostate cancer.

Tests for iodine deficiency include the iodine loading test and a simpler test measuring iodine in the urine. Regenerus are one of the labs that offer the iodine loading test. Viva Health and Regenerus can measure it in the urine.