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DETOXIFICATION

Sam Ziff

Dorland's Medical Dictionary defines detoxification as:
"1. reduction of the toxic properties of poisons. 2. treatment designed to free an addict from his drug habit. Metabolic detoxification, reduction of the toxic properties of a substance by chemical changes induced in the body, producing a compound which is less poisonous or is more readily eliminated."

There are two other words that should be clarified at the outset, chelate and chemotherapy. Dorland's definition of these words are:

Chelate: "to combine with a metal in complexes in which the metal is part of a ring. By extension, a chemical compound in which a metallic ion is sequestered and firmly bound into a ring within the chelating molecule. Chelates are used in chemotherapeutic treatments for metal poisoning."

Chemotherapy: "the treatment of disease by chemical agents; first applied to use of chemicals that affect the causative organism unfavorably but do not harm the patient."

Nonproprietary agents that might possess the desired characteristics to fit the above three definitions, do not command any great interest within the medical community or allocation of government research funds. As a result, there is a paucity of research data on such substances. Conversely, there is quite a bit of data available on proprietary substances, replete with their potential toxic side effects.

The question of which substances will assist in the detoxification of heavy metals is one that is most frequently asked and discussed by BioProbe subscribers. The same is true in relation to queries from the general public. In an effort to satisfy some of these questions Bio-Probe has done an extensive literature search and review on the subject. We will attempt to fill the information void on non-toxic substances available for use as chelates or detoxicants.

The subject is an extremely complex one and the information we will provide will hopefully clarify some of the complexities, while at the same time providing useable data on the substances that can be used. Time and space limitations restrict the amount of information that can be included in any one issue of Bio-Probe. Consequently, we will be providing the information in installments.

To place the complexities of detoxification in perspective we will concern ourselves with the following major aspects:

1. Elimination or reduction of the source.
2. Mediating the toxic effects. This can encompass the prevention of free radical generation; the scavenging of free radicals; preventing enzymatic interference and maintaining homeostasis of essential nutrients and minerals.
3. Controlling transport, tissue distribution and inducing elimination.
4. Repletion of essential nutrients and minerals.