

hypothyroidism, 29% of cases of Hashimoto's thyroiditis, and in 4% of hospital control patients.

Complement-fixing antibodies to thyroid were recorded in 37% of cases of pernicious anaemia and in 4% of the hospital control patients.

Tests for immunological specificity were made with an extract of human liver.

In 14 cases of untreated spontaneous hypothyroidism the results of alimentary-function tests were correlated with the serological findings.

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W. J. IRVINE, M.B., M.R.C.P.Ed.
S. H. DAVIES, M.B., Ph.C., M.R.C.P.Ed.
I. W. DELAMORE, M.B., M.R.C.P.Ed.
A. WYNN WILLIAMS, M.D., Ph.D., D.C.P.
Departments of Therapeutics, Medicine, and
Pathology, University of Edinburgh; and
the S.E. Regional Blood Transfusion
Service, Edinburgh.

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Medical Memoranda

Case of Diethylpropion Addiction

It is well known that amphetamine and its derivatives (dexamphetamine and metamphetamine) can give rise to addiction and the occurrence of psychotic symptoms resembling those found in schizophrenia. Connell (1958) reviewed this subject in his well-known monograph. Likewise, phenmetrazine ("preludin") can cause a similar pattern of addiction and psychosis in its users (Bethell, 1957; Clein, 1957; Glatt, 1957). Diethylpropion ("tenuate") was introduced in 1958 in an attempt to find an appetite-suppressing drug without undesirable C.N.S.-stimulating effects. Several recent reports have stressed its usefulness in the control of obesity and the virtual absence of undesirable side-effects (Wilson and Long, 1960; Jaffé, 1961; Seaton *et al.*, 1961; Nash, 1961; Hadden and Lucey, 1961; Jones, 1962). A case is here reported which suggests that the same pattern of addiction and psychosis can occur with diethylpropion as with amphetamine and phenmetrazine.

CASE HISTORY

A 26-year-old unmarried woman was first admitted to Long Grove Hospital in January, 1961. She complained that people were talking about her and she could hear mumbling voices. She improved rapidly. A diagnosis of schizophrenia was made and she was discharged seven weeks later on trifluoperazine 5 mg. b.d. She was

readmitted soon afterwards with similar symptoms, and again they cleared up rapidly on trifluoperazine. On her third admission in November she mentioned for the first time that she was taking large doses of diethylpropion, but was vague about the number of tablets she consumed. She again improved rapidly, taking her own discharge after a fortnight in hospital. She was again admitted on April 3, 1962. She had not worked in the previous five months; she felt that people were talking about her, and said she could hear voices saying that she was to be poisoned. She admitted having taken large amounts of diethylpropion tablets (9-90 a day); her father confirmed that she spent all the money he gave her on them, and said that he knew that one day she bought 100 tablets and within 48 hours had taken them all.

Her symptoms cleared up rapidly again on withdrawal of the tablets, though she asked for them for the first two weeks of this admission. She admitted to having taken slimming tablets since the age of 15 years—first dexamphetamine and later phenmetrazine. She changed to diethylpropion in 1960 owing to the difficulty in getting supplies of phenmetrazine. Her family doctor informed us that she had been plaguing him for slimming tablets for some years and he had only once prescribed diethylpropion for her in December, 1961, as he felt they were safer than other tablets. She asked for "tenuate" by name. She obviously was able to get them from another source despite the fact that their sale is restricted.

She is an inadequate young woman with marked inferiority feelings, and she stated that diethylpropion gave her the courage to face the world and made her feel more lively.

It will be noted that this patient's psychotic symptoms are similar in every respect to the psychosis described in amphetamine addicts. Also, she previously took dexamphetamine and phenmetrazine. In the first three cases of phenmetrazine addiction described all the patients had previously taken amphetamine and its derivatives. It is interesting to note that it was three years from the introduction of phenmetrazine to the market before the first case of psychosis due to its use was published. This is approximately the same length of time that has occurred between the introduction of diethylpropion and the publication of this case of addiction to it.

It seems that certain vulnerable people with inadequate and psychopathic personalities may become habituated and addicted to almost any drug which has a euphoriant action, no matter how slight that action is, and will go out of their way to obtain such drugs in large quantities to get the stimulation they crave.

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LEWIS J. CLEIN, M.D., M.R.C.P., D.P.M.,
Consultant Psychiatrist.

D. ROGER BENADY, M.B., B.S., D.C.H.,
Registrar,

Long Grove Hospital,
Epsom, Surrey.

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