

L Dopa: A Hallucinogen

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Yaryura-Tobias (1970) and Yaryura-To-bias, Wolpert, Dana and Merlis (1970) hoped to use L Dopa to ameliorate the symptoms of parkinsonism often produced by tranquilizers. But, the experiment had to be discontinued because the patients became more psychotic.

One patient with True Parkinson's disease was given L Dopa; his symptoms decreased but he slowly became depressed and three months later suffered auditory and visual hallucinations. When the dose of 6 gm. per day was reduced to 3 gm. the hallucinations disappeared but he still remained depressed. Another two cases became severely depressed while taking L Dopa.

Other studies have shown that up to 10% of

patients given L Dopa will develop psychiatric symptoms.

Thus, it is evident that L Dopa can be termed a psychoactive drug, much like methionine but perhaps more closely allied to the sympathomimetic amines.

The interesting question is how does L Dopa act? It is a precursor of several important chemicals. One of these is dopa-chrome which is a precursor of melanic pigment in skin and brain. This suggests that excessive quantities of dopachrome may produce schizophrenic symptoms much as does adrenochrome. Is dopa-chrome one of the schizophrenic toxins?

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To those who would influence our position, whether from within or without the Foundation, the parallel between the open warfare between "wets" and "drys" in the field of alcoholism should be considered. The net product of time, effort and money focused upon who is right, rather than what is right, has left the individual sufferer—the alcoholic—in limbo.

It is my hope and expectation that this decade

will be opened by the development of an executive leadership and the necessary funds essential to the growth that will establish the Foundation as the mature force required to attain true progress in the long neglected field of schizophrenia.

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