

2nd International Orthomolecular Congress

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The 2nd International Orthomolecular Congress in Cologne (Germany) was a success. In the last few years, there has been an increased interest in orthomolecular medicine among German health professionals, MD's as well as Heilpraktiker (registered therapists in Germany). More than 200 health professionals attended the conference with the title 'Haut, Allergie und Umwelt' (Skin, Allergy and Environment). Referents were invited to discuss the importance of this subject, which might also be considered as clinical ecology, with an emphasis on dermatology.

I began the day with a review of the subject: how stressors influence human health by allergic and toxic reactions; how the immune system is challenged (eicosanoid metabolism and free radical pathology); and what therapeutic means the orthomolecular practitioner has at hand to approach the problem.

Important in the field of clinical ecology is diagnostics. A specialist in this field is Dr. Wolfgang Bayer from Stuttgart. He has many years of experience with nutrient assays in whole blood in his laboratory, and spoke in detail about nutrient assays with respect to immune functions.

A practising clinical ecologist is the Gruiua Ionescu, MD of Romania. He has two advanced ecological clinics in Germany, and for many years has treated his patients with orthomolecular medicine. He showed a number of cases of his treatment's effect on skin diseases.

Speaking from a practical point of view was Heilpraktiker Jan Moestel, who emphasized the importance of the condition of the gut in relation to skin and immunological problems. In concurrence with this view was Dr. Eleonore Procházka, who also stressed a holistic approach to treating skin diseases, with inclusion of psychological factors.

Dr Gerhard Oehlenschläger, physicist and biochemist, reviewed free radical pathology within this framework. He argued the important role of glutathione in the detoxification process of the liver. Dr. Bernd Kuklinsky, internist and well-known for his research in Rostock on pancreatic cancer and antioxidants, was asked to speak about toxic and allergenic substances in closed spaces. His referate was a complete overview of this subject. Dr. Siegfried Schlett from Munich, pharmacist and physicist, spoke about Multiple Chemical Syndrome and discussed the quality of food supplements in this respect. Prof. Gerhard Uhlenbruck, from the University of Cologne, had a lecture which was a bit of a departure from the conference subject, but nonetheless, very interesting. He spoke about his discovery of the importance of lectin-blocking agents on liver tumor metastasis. Lectins are sugar binding macromolecules and are involved in the metastasis of tumor cells in the liver. Galactose by infusion have been shown to bind these lectins.

This was the second German language orthomolecular congress. The first was organized a year ago around the theme "chronic fatigue syndrome." Interest in orthomolecular medicine is progressing in Germany. The German law is quite restrictive with regards to dietary supplements. Preparations with dosages higher than three times the RDA are regarded as drugs, and have to be registered as such. This restriction makes it very difficult to promote orthomolecular medicine. The same situation exists in France. While these two countries are the mightiest within the European Union, the ramifications of future European legislation with regards to supplements will not be known for the next few years. Efforts should be made to convince European authorities in Bruxelles of the necessity of supplements for human health.



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