

Message from the President

The 28th Nutritional Medicine Today Conference took place on April 15-18 this year in Ottawa. As usual since 1994, the year of the foundation of ISOM, a meeting with the international attendees was organised. About 15 people were present, including Dr. Abram Hoffer, the founder and inspiration for ISOM. At this meeting Gert Schuitemaker was elected as the new president of ISOM for the coming three years. He is the successor of Oslim Malina, MD, from Brasil.

Gert Schuitemaker is a pharmacist from the Netherlands. During his studies, he was already active in orthomolecular medicine. Since 1983 he has been director of the Ortho Institute, and edits and publishes the magazine Ortho. He also issues a newsletter and an Orthomolecular Yearbook (since 1993), gives lectures and courses, and organises congresses. Gert Schuitemaker is former president and founder of the Maatschappij ter Bevordering van de Orthomoleculaire Geneeskunde (MBOG), the Dutch orthomolecular association. He is a regular guest and spokesman on radio and television programs. In the Dutch language he has published more than 200 articles, some in German and English. He has written several books.

Setting the Orthomolecular Standard

Linus Pauling, writing in the journal *Science* in 1968, defined orthomolecular psychiatry as “the treatment of mental illness by the provision of the optimum molecular environment for the mind, especially the optimum concentrations of substances normally present in the human body.”¹ Pauling was probably inspired by the work of psychiatrist and scientist Abram Hoffer, who with his colleague, Humphry Osmond, were the first (in the 1950s) to conduct a double blind, placebo controlled study using vitamin B₃ in schizophrenic patients. Other pioneers in the field of nutritional medicine were the Shute brothers, two London, Ontario physicians who gave

their patients vitamin E in high dosages; Dr. W. Kaufman in New York who was the first to use large doses of vitamin B₃ for the treatment of arthritis and as an anti-aging nutrient and Dr. F. Klenner, the first physician to use huge doses of vitamin C for many serious illnesses such as polio.

In 1979 Linus Pauling launched a more workable definition, expanded to include general medicine as well: Orthomolecular medicine was now defined as “the achievement and preservation of optimum health and the treatment of disease by varying the concentrations in the human body of substances that are normally present and are required for health.” Among these substances are the vitamins and essential minerals; the major food-proteins (the source of essential amino acids); fats (an energy substrate as well as a source of the essential fatty acids); and carbohydrates (the major fuel for the body, providing most of the energy needed for heat, muscular work and biochemical reactions). There are also many important substances that are manufactured in the cells of the body—the various hormones, enzymes, neurotransmitters, choline, cholesterol, lecithin and many others.²

Therapists today have many healing methods available to treat patients, from homeopathic medicine to xenobiotic medicine, but orthomolecular physicians are therapists who make nutritional biochemistry an integral part of their practice. So, I welcome an eclectic approach to therapy as the main thing is to use what is effective for the patient. It makes rational sense that physicians should combine treatments but how many are actually combining orthomolecular medicine with chelation therapy, phytotherapy, acupuncture, etc? However they borrow from the various new therapies, they should keep in mind the definition of orthomolecular medicine, when they practise or teach this fantastic tool in medicine.

Many practitioners, all around the world, are actually practising orthomolecular medicine under the flag “nutritional medicine.” Nevertheless, orthomolecular medicine is relatively a new branch of medicine and this means that the standards are not commonly recognized. Not everyone has had the opportunity to study Pauling’s article, although it is now digitally available on the ISOM homepage.³

There is another point which makes it necessary to promote the orthomolecular standard. As it becomes more popular and known, people, organizations and companies in general want to associate themselves with such a successful new concept. This is fine, however, they should keep in mind that orthomolecular medicine is clearly defined and practitioners should see therapies in the spirit of this definition.

As the new president of the International Society for Orthomolecular Medicine, setting the orthomolecular standard is one of my high priorities, and making this standard widely available is also a priority. To help achieve this, ISOM will issue a manifest, in which the principles and practice of orthomolecular medicine is further explained. This will serve as a useful addition to the *Science* article of Linus Pauling. In this way I hope to bring into consciousness the orthomolecular standard to the various national Orthomolecular Societies, (which have now been founded in sixteen countries).

I consider it very important to communicate with you, the readers of the *Journal of Orthomolecular Medicine*. Do not hesitate to write me, preferably by e-mail.⁴ We can exchange ideas and data to help us in our common goal, and also allows me to understand what is going on in your country. ISOM wants to join you in your efforts to develop orthomolecular medicine. ISOM can function as intermediary between you and your colleagues in other countries. Make use of it!

Dr. Gert E. Schuitemaker

References

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2. Cameron E, Pauling L: *Cancer and Vitamin C*. The Linus Pauling Institute of Science and Medicine, 1979; updated and expanded edition, Camino Books, Philadelphia, 1993
3. <http://www.orthomed.org/pauling2.htm>
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