

Book Reviews

The Infant Survival Guide

Lendon H. Smith, MD, Joseph Hattersley
Smart Publications, PO Box 4667,
Petaluma, CA. 94955 224 pages.
US \$14.95

About 3,000 infants die each year in the United States from Crib Deaths, probably 300 in Canada. According to these authors this is totally unnecessary; it can be prevented by a very few simple measures that are already being used in other countries, for example New Zealand.

There are two main causal factors. The first comes from the environment that we have created for our infants, and the second arises from poor health of these infants due to poor nutrition, and a major assault on the immune system - the use of vaccinations before these infants are protected enough to cope with these vaccines.

The main environmental factor is the use of toxic chemicals as fire retardants in the mattresses of the cribs in which these babies sleep. These were designed to decrease fire hazards, but in placing these chemicals in mattresses no investigation was made of their safety. As the babies sleep, their mattresses are warmed up and then release toxic heavier-than-air gases which the baby inhales, especially if it is sleeping on its face. That is why cribs with the head of the crib slightly elevated are not as dangerous, since the heavier-than-air toxic gases flow down and away from the baby's face. The solution is to make mattresses that do not contain these toxic gases, called BabeSafe Mattresses. They were introduced in New Zealand, and out of 100,000 babies sleeping on these mattresses there have been no crib deaths. If they are not available in USA and Canada, mattresses can be covered with plastic sheets which do not permit these gases to contact the baby. The book contains a description of how this can be done.

The second assault from the environment is the use of vaccines. These have been

shown to be major factors, but when the babies are in very good health they can cope with these insults better. In his book, *Every Second Child*, Dr. A. Kalakorinos describes how he reduced the aboriginal infant mortality from 50 to 5 percent by improving their diets and ensuring that they were taking vitamin C. He found that in Australia there was an epidemic of infant deaths following the mass compulsory vaccination among the aboriginal peoples. I usually advise my patients not to permit any vaccination of their children, or themselves for that matter, until they have been on at least 1 gram of vitamin C each day for seven days. This brings us to the nutritional factors and the use of vitamin C is one of the most important.

With these simple measure, i.e. non-toxic mattresses, and vitamin C and other nutritional measures, there should be no more problem with crib deaths. Will this happen in Canada? Probably not, because the authorities will demand double blind controlled experiments before they will be convinced. They consider the evidence in this book to be anecdotal. But if these double blind experiments were to be completed they would then look upon exactly the same results as scientific. This is one of the strangest aspects of modern scientific medicine.

The Back Pain Bible

Anthony J. Cichoke, D.C.
Keats Publishing, 4255 West Touhy Ave
Lincolnwood, Chicago 60646-1975
1999, US \$16.95

Dr. Cichoke is a chiropractor and, of all the health professions, chiropractors have had the best track record in dealing with back pain. He is also an expert in the use of enzymes in therapy and has written several excellent books dealing with this topic. In this book he deals with back pain in a comprehensive way and includes all the therapeutic programs that can play a role from simple physical treatment to use of enzymes, nutrition and the various forms of complementary medicine.

Severe back pain afflicts over 1 percent of the population but almost everyone has experienced back pain of one form or another. The causes come from three interrelated factors, physical, nutritional and emotional, and treatment may need to involve all these factors. I recommend that you read this book. It is simple, well organized and complete. The description of physical and mental relaxation exercises is excellent.

Medicine, in general, not yet versed in complementary medicine, will not like this book. Medicine and surgery are given short shrift and the mainstay of prescription drugs are treated in a negative way. I have seen what some of these anti-inflammatories can do to people although in many patients they are helpful but they cover rather than get at the multiple roots of the illness. Drugs should be considered emergency only for very severe pain and should be eliminated as soon as possible while depending upon the complementary treatment as the mainstay of the therapy.

Omega-3 Oils: A Practical Guide

Donald Rudin, et al

Avery Publishing Group

Garden City, N.Y. 1996

Paperback, 216 pages \$11.95

Interest in the essential fatty acids, especially the omega 3 type in the treatment of patients with bipolar disease, has been growing rapidly in the past year. This book by Rudin, one of the first to recommend the use of flax seed oil for treating these patients and also schizophrenic patients, and Clara Felix, one of the first writers to highlight these important oils is thus very timely even though it was published several years ago.

The authors tell us what we need to know about these very important oils or fatty acids. They are essential because they can not be made in the body from other fats. They are also essential because our modern food technology has removed a substantial portion of these fats that would be present if we still ate the way our ancestors did many

years ago. The main sources of EFAs are the fish oils and flax seed oil with lesser amounts in canola oil. EFA-deficient diets play a role in a large number of chronic degenerative illnesses such as heart disease, many mental diseases, diseases due to poor immune function and autoimmune diseases such as the arthritides. According to Rudin the deficiency of these EFAs creates a universal disease which may be called substrate pellagra in contrast to vitamin B₃ pellagra which is a deficiency of the enzymes needed to convert these EFAs to the important prostaglandins which play a role in so many reactions in our bodies.

Many years ago Rudin showed that adding flax seed oil, about 3 to 6 tablespoons daily, to the treatment of the major psychoses was therapeutic for these patients and helped many of them to recover. Years ago, when I was President of the Huxley Institute of Biosocial Research and Ben Webster was Chairman of the Board, Dr. Rudin approached us. He had completed his work but needed a grant to help him prepare his first book on his findings. We met with him in New York and we were both impressed with his scientific knowledge, with the impressive results he was getting and with the need to make his work familiar to the medical profession. We gave him his grant. This was one of the many activities sponsored by Huxley that was so helpful to the public.

For the past year I have been adding a preparation rich in EFAs on the basis of reports by David Horrobin who has been studying these oils for the past 3 decades. It is clear to me that the number of my patients recovering has increased. I also use the vitamins which are synergistic. In my opinion these patients need the right diet, the correct vitamins especially B₃ and the right EFAs. Some patients will be deficient in the vitamins but may be getting enough of the fatty acids, others will be fatty acid deficient and the vitamins alone will not be as helpful. Laboratory tests to decide which group these patients fall into would be very useful.

—A Hoffer, M.D., Ph.D., FRCP (C)