

Korean Society for Orthomolecular Medicine: Past, Present, and Future

Readers of this journal may best remember Linus Pauling as the champion of Orthomolecular Medicine. He not only pioneered the field, but also fought a rigorous battle against the allopathic medicine-driven society of his time for its acceptance. The challenges that face the Korean Society for Orthomolecular Medicine (KSOM) today may be very different than those that Pauling had to overcome, but they are just as great. Founded by Dr. Sung-Ho Park in 1998, KSOM's mission extends beyond raising awareness of the field. The acceptance of Orthomolecular Medicine by the health care community is perhaps of lesser concern compared to the acceptance it needs to at-



Dr. Sun Park, KSOM president and John Park, present Dr. Abram Hoffer with a gift at the 30th Nutritional Medicine Today

tain from the South Korean government.

Since the governing law in Korea recognizes vitamins as prescribed drugs rather than dietary supplements, they can only be obtained with a physician's prescription in crude form. This limits the public's access to vitamins and means that they cannot be dispensed to optimize your health, only to defend it from disease when your doctor sees fit—and this has turned in to a major concern for KSOM. Consequently, our mission becomes clear: Make vitamins more accessible and educate the

community on their many benefits.

How have we planned to achieve this mission? Over the past year, KSOM has been actively recruiting physicians as members and showing them the benefits of prescribing vitamins to their patients. This has been our first priority as we feel that if we are successful in increasing the amount of vitamins prescribed nationally, this will not only encourage vitamin production but also, and most importantly, convince the government that dietary supplements are important for our everyday lives. Our aggressive efforts to educate KSOM's membership are obvious. We currently host regional conferences throughout the year to further educate our members in Seoul and Pusan and we hope to soon bring them to Kuang-Ju, Dae-Gu and Masan. Dr. Jong-Gil Kim, a regional director in Pusan, has been instrumental to the success of these conferences.

Both Dr. Park and Dr. Kim not only publish a weekly column on Orthomolecular Medicine for several medical trade newspapers, they also appear regularly on radio shows to reach the general public as well. Dr. Park recently published a book titled *Orthomolecular Medicine*. This is the first book published in the field of Orthomolecular Medicine in Korea, and we hope that it will help KSOM members understand the basics and the history of the field. In the coming year, we hope to initiate an annual international conference for Orthomolecular Medicine in Seoul to attract established speakers from around the world.

Our efforts have resulted in an impressive membership of over 150 physicians and academics who are committed to raising awareness of Orthomolecular Medicine within their respective communities. We feel that academics can also contribute a great deal toward the success of KSOM's mission by increasing awareness of our organization within universities. We are very optimistic about our success, and hope to reach 200 members by next year. This will involve a lot

of work and depend on strong financial support. KSOM currently benefits from sponsorships by the SuperlifeNet and Han-Il Pharmaceuticals Inc. but we need more partners to successfully achieve our goals. Although we have already accomplished so much, there is more to do. By supporting KSOM, everybody wins. The continued rollout and development of our awareness campaign ensures that more and more South Koreans will have access to the vitamins they need to achieve their optimum health.

–John Park, M.D.
Vice President,

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News from Ben Gurion University of the Negev

Hoffer Vickar Chair of Psychiatry, Unit for Orthomolecular Clinical Research Beersheva, Israel In a report, in press, American Journal of Psychiatry, Dr V Lerner and six colleagues reported that pyridoxine was very useful in treating tardive dyskinesia. They used 400 milligrams

daily and found no side effects. The improvement was evident in three weeks but needed 300 milligrams per day or more.

Pyridoxine is the third nutrient which is therapeutic for patients with tardive dyskinesia. Vitamin E has been found to be helpful and much earlier manganese, especially combined with niacin, was very helpful. Following Kunin's (1) report I began to use manganese routinely and was able to corroborate his findings. Orthomolecular psychiatrists seldom see tardive dyskinesia probably because with this approach lower dosages of drugs are needed and for shorter periods of time and the use of vitamin B-3 which is a common of all orthomolecular treatment for schizophrenia. Since I have been practicing orthomolecular medicine I have seen very few develop t.d. in my practice but have seen many more already suffering from td. In almost every case the tardive dyskinesia cleared after awhile by using manganese, and decreasing the amount of drug.

References

1. Kunin RA: Manganese and niacin in the treatment of drug-induced dyskinesias. *J Orthomol Psychiat*, 5: 4-27, 1976

