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I therefore disclaim my possible errors and heresies one more time: maybe we should attribute all this to Genes, or Occult powers, or Coincidence. Meanwhile, I seem in damned good shape for a man of my age, and not even the most conservative “experts” could seriously argue that my vitamins and nutrients have done me any harm. And I doubt that anyone could claim, with a straight face, that equal doses of allopathic drugs, taken for an equal period of time, would do no harm to mind, memory, sexuality, or general energy.

Everybody has their own special nightmare, their private version of living in a Kafka novel. Some worry that they might fall through a timewarp and land in the hands of the Gestapo or the KGB. Others live in perpetual anxiety about an IRS audit. In New York and New Jersey, most people have an acute terror about accidentally saying or doing something that annoys the Mafia. Californians dread losing their temper and thereby appearing “unmellow,” which they evidently believe might lead to their getting deported back to the U.S. mainland.

I, too, have always had a personal horror: the concept of becoming hospitalized while in the United States and thus falling into the hands of the American Medical Association. Fortunately, at the age of sixty, I have managed to avoid this terrifying experience all my life-and hence really only know about the Horror through the pathetic stories told by friends who have actually spent time in American hospitals. These tales sound much like the stories of others I know, survivors of the Holocaust, with one additional misery often included at the end: after “liberation” and escape back to normal non-nightmare life, the butchers go on pursuing you, until you have lost everything in your savings account and gone through bankruptcy court.

How have I evaded the Dr. A.M.A. House of Blood? I don’t know, really. Maybe I just got born with some especially good genes. (Materialists would like that explanation.) Or maybe I have an Ally, an occult or extraterrestrial Protector. (New Agers would love that one.) Personally, I see no special reason to believe either of these charming notions. I tend to suspect that I slid easily through the ‘40s and ‘50s-years of prostate cancers, lung cancers, rectum cancers, heart attacks, strokes, and other miscellaneous unpleasantnesses for most males -because I started doing acid (ascorbic acid: megadoses of vitamin C) at around the age of 37. I had heard Dr. Linus Pauling lecture on that marvelous substance, and I figured Dr. Pauling’s ideas deserved a fair trial because (1) the A.M.A. immediately denounced vitamin C therapy violently- always a good sign that somebody has discovered something important; and (2) Dr. Pauling already had two Nobel prizes, so I could hardly consider him an idiot.

23 years later, I continue to take megadoses of ascorbic. Despite a number of bad habits during most of those years — including smoking and bad diet — I have not only stayed out of hospitals, but have also

never had a cold in all that time, while people all around me often sniff, snivel and slide down the slippery slope from the common cold to the major flu or even pneumonia. I noted this “magical” immunity especially during my six years in Dublin, Ireland, a city located (I must tell you because most Americans don’t seem to know) further north than almost all of Canada. Irish wits describe the Celtic climate as “nine months of winter and three months of bloody awful weather.”)

My total freedom from head colds especially impresses me, since almost everybody except us “vitamin nuts” gets a few colds a year. But, of course, one can explain this by invoking the almighty Genes or the occult Allies (or maybe even the marvelous Coincidence, that supernatural entity that always seems to banish or at least disempower all inconvenient data.)

Over the years I have tried to learn more about vitamins, nutrients, and health. Since the federal government currently holds to the view that the First Amendment does not permit controversies in this area, I must write with great caution throughout this article, so I remind you again that you can dismiss everything here by invoking Genes, occult Allies, or maybe good old panchrestomathal Coincidence. I started using Personal Radical Shield and Choline Cooler about six years ago. The PRS contains as much vitamin C as I think I need, plus many other goodies, and the Choline Cooler has ingredients that often have appeared beneficial in laboratory tests (which conservative M.D.s still dispute, of course.)

While living in Los Angeles a few years ago, I went for a medical checkup. The doctor I chose had an orthodox M.D. but also used “alternative,” holistic, and even Chinese medical techniques, whenever they seemed appropriate. At the end of the exam, he asked me what vitamins and minerals I took regularly. I told him, and he had never heard of Personal Radical Shield. He asked to see a bottle, to read the contents, so I came back the next day and left an empty bottle with his nurse. He called me that evening. “That has everything you need,” he said. Well, now, I begin to suspect that not all doctors share the dominant allopathic bias against nutritional and vitamin data. It just seems that way because the allopathic Fundamentalists make a lot a noise and try to pretend they represent the whole medical profession.

He asked me what vitamins and minerals I took regularly. Of course, Personal Radical Shield and Choline Cooler have not helped prevent all health problems. (I never thought they would.) For a while, I had high blood pressure and my Los Angeles doctor put me on heavy doses of allopathic medicines, which he warned me would have some bad side-effects. He also urged several changes in lifestyle, including breaking the smoking addiction, avoiding red meat, and exercising daily, which would help me get back to normal blood pressure without increasing dependence on the medications. Blood pressure dropped slowly back to normal over a period of nearly two years — but meanwhile I suffered various side effects of the drugs, including lethargy, tired eyes, inability to concentrate, decreased work output, and uncharacteristic depression.

Gradually the doctor decreased the heavy allopathic medicines (which lower your blood pressure in much the same way as getting hit on the head and staying in bed does) — and all these distressing symptoms went away. My energy came back, I regularly work a full day again without drowsing, and I feel happy again.

One month ago, in Soquel — a small burg on the Central California coast, where I now live — I again went in for a checkup. As usual, I picked an M.D. with training also in alternative medicine. After the checkup (in which blood pressure and other vital signs appeared normal, as they have all this year), the doctor said, “You ought to take a few vitamins and nutrients, to stay in good shape.” “What do you recommend?” I asked. “For general health, Personal Radical Shield,” he said. And in your case, I think Choline Cooler will prove helpful.”

I have continued the changes in lifestyle (i.e., I still avoid smoking and red meat, and I continue exercising, when I remember that I should) and blood pressure now remains normal without the heavy medications. I suspect the Choline Cooler has helped a good deal in my recovery from the loss of concentration and loss of work energy which the allopathic chemicals induced. My doctor thinks so, too — but then again, such opinions always need a disclaimer in this country, where the First Amendment still remains suspended and no citizen may safely question A.M.A. dogma.