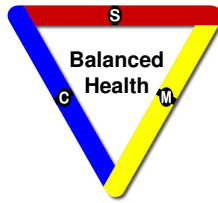


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Natural Alternatives in the Treatment of ADD, ADHD, OCD & Depression

By

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November 10, 2004

What do Mr. Hale, Mrs. Hale and their two children, Pat and Helen Hale, have in common? They are all part of the same family! When looking at such conditions as Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD), Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and depression a similar relationship can be made—these conditions are all part of the same family because they are all dysfunctions related to neurotransmitter depletion.

This article discusses 1) what neurotransmitters are, 2) what neurotransmitter depletion is, 3) the causes and effects of neurotransmitter depletion, and 4) how to normalize neurotransmitter depletion naturally.

What we see, feel, touch, smell, taste, and hear, as well as muscle contraction and how we think, are some of the many functions controlled and regulated by the nervous system and its neurotransmitters.

A neurotransmitter is a chemical substance that transmits a nerve impulse across a synapse. In other words, neurotransmitters are the chemical messengers of the nervous system.

Picture the nervous system as a relay team. In a relay race each of the runners on the team carries a baton while running around the track. In the nervous system, the “runner” is a nerve carrying an impulse and the “baton” is a neurotransmitter.

To successfully run the relay race the first runner must successfully hand off a baton to the second runner. In the nervous system, the

first nerve must successfully transmit its impulse to the second nerve by handing off the neurotransmitter.

In a relay race, if the process of handing off the baton is performed successfully the relay team can continue towards the finish line. Likewise, as long as a nerve impulse is transmitted from one nerve to the next (by proper neurotransmitter exchange) the message can reach its destination. However, if the handoff is not smooth and efficient, the neurotransmitter gets dropped, or at worst there is a shortage of neurotransmitters in the system and the nerve impulse carrying the vital message dies.

Neurotransmitter depletion occurs when there is an inadequate amount of neurotransmitter substance available to transmit a nerve.

If a relay team does not have a baton, they cannot complete the race. Likewise, in the nervous system, when there are inadequate levels of neurotransmitters, nerve impulses never reach their final destination, which results in various forms of neurotransmitter dysfunctions.

The four causes of neurotransmitter depletion are 1) excretion of neurotransmitters, 2) nutritional depletion, 3) neurotransmitter depleting drugs, and 4) neurotoxic chemicals.

Excretion of neurotransmitters involves either drugs or foods that cause an increased amount of neurotransmitters to be released from one nerve to the next.

Nutritional depletion of neurotransmitters results from a diet deficient of the nutrients required to make an adequate supply of neurotransmitters.

Neurotransmitter depleting drugs, such as antidepressants like Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors or Mono Amine Oxidase Inhibitors actually cause further neurotransmitter depletion over time because they do nothing to increase the actual amount of neurotransmitters. Drugs only redistribute and further deplete an already depleted nervous system.

Neurotoxic chemicals, such as heavy metals, yeast or unfriendly bacteria, create neurotoxic metabolic waste products that the body can absorb and can cause damage or “plug” the receptors sites that are waiting to bind a neurotransmitter.

The effects of neurotransmitter depletion are many. Going back to the relay race analogy, if a team were running the race dysfunctionally, what would this look like? They would be slow in handing off the baton, they would drop the baton, or they would be running a race without a baton. All three of these scenarios would lead to the team either not finishing the race or finishing it poorly. The same holds true for a person with neurotransmitter depletion. The nerve impulse is transmitted to the next nerve slowly (or not at all) because the neurotransmitter gets dropped or the system is so depleted that there is not enough substance left to transmit the message and finish the race.

The end result of not being able to complete the race leads to a variety of effects depending on the type of message the nerve impulse was carrying. If the impulse was carrying a message to the area of the brain that caused one to be happy and it didn't make it there, then this would leave one feeling down or depressed. If the impulse was carrying a message to the area of the brain that allowed for concentration, focus or peace, the result could be ADD, ADHD or OCD.

We know the names and the faces of neurotransmitter depletion as ADD, ADHD, OCD and depression to name a few. The pharmaceutical industry knows these names and faces as well, and has invented neurotropic and psychotropic drugs to treat these dysfunctions—drugs like Ritalin, Adderall, Strattera, Concerta,

Prozac, Paxil, Lexapro, Celexa, Zoloft, Effexor and Xanax, to name a few.

What do these drugs do? They are all designed to treat the effects of neurotransmitter depletion by chemically modulating how much time one nerve gets to hand off its neurotransmitter “baton” to the next nerve. That's it.

Drugs that treat neurotransmitter dysfunction can only work if there are enough neurotransmitters in the system for neurotransmitters to work. Most drugs used to treat neurotransmitter dysfunction further deplete the nervous system of neurotransmitters, which is why many drugs that are effective in treating certain conditions stop working after awhile.

In treating neurotransmitter depletion naturally, one must provide the body with an adequate supply of nutrients and raw materials necessary to create an abundance of neurotransmitters.

Although there are 183 identifiable neurotransmitters in the nervous system, there exist two master classes of neurotransmitters—the serotonin system and the catecholamine system.

A master neurotransmitter is one that controls and regulates other neurotransmitters.

The science behind natural treatment of neurotransmitter depletion involves supplementing with an adequate and balanced amount of the amino acid precursors and their cofactors used to make the master neurotransmitters. In the case of manufacturing serotonin, L-Tryptophan or 5-HTP is required. The precursor to the catecholamines is from the amino acid L-Tyrosine. Along with supplementing with these two amino acids there are certain cofactors that must be incorporated as well such as L-Cysteine, L-Lysine, Folic Acid, Selenium, Calcium and Vitamins C and B6.

The faces of neurotransmitter dysfunction are many; the origin is the same — neurotransmitter depletion. How do you want to treat yours?

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