ESTROGEN AND OSTEOPOROSIS, ETC.

Estrogen has been promoted (on grounds that are at best dubious) as a therapy for menopause, for aging skin, for heart disease, for cancer, for premenstrual syndrome, for endometriosis, for preventing miscarriages, for nervousness and depression, for abnormal bleeding, and for osteoporosis. From Sept. 21, 1977, drug companies are required to give doctors and druggists brochures with estrogen, warning of the risk of cancer, and advising that estrogen not be given for nervousness, depression, or for "restoring youthfulness" during menopause, because it is ineffective for those purposes (UPI, July 20-21, 1977). However, they failed to mention studies which had already reported that estrogen causes, rather than cures, heart attacks. It causes a magnesium deficiency, which promotes clotting (Seelig and Heggtveit. *Amer. J. Clin. Nutr. 27,* pp. 59-79, 1974). The magnesium deficiency also promotes abnormal fat metabolism, contributing to heart disease. Even before estrogen was chemically identified, it was known to promote breast cancer; in the 1930s it was shown to cause tissue aging, fibroid tumors, various cancers, premenstrual syndrome and menstrual abnormalities, and to induce abortions. Nevertheless, from 1947 to 1964 a synthetic estrogen, DES, already demonstrated to be highly toxic, was prescribed to millions of women to *prevent* miscarriages. When women succeeded in having babies in spite of this mistreatment, it typically caused girl babies to later develop vaginal cancer, and many of the boy babies grew up to be sterile. By the early 1960s it was apparent that birth control drugs had a bigger market than drugs for the miscarriage trade, so DES was switched over to use in birth control pills, and is still widely used as a morning after pill." Since estrogen was known to cause obesity and edema, it occurred to someone that there would be a really big market for DES in the meat industry: chickens, turkeys and cows with edema weigh more, and gross fatness not only increases the animals' weight, it also fills out the skin so the animal looks smooth and plump. (The same effect of plumpness has been sold to women as "young skin," even though estrogen actually causes aging of the connective tissue in skin.) Meat graders have said that DES lowers the quality of the meat (apart from the residue toxicity), but the increased weight makes it a profitable practice.

By 1950, any normally perceptive person was aware that physicians were doing things exactly backwards in many cases. This was not the result of a new homeopathic philos-

sophy, or the "hair of the dog that bit you" theory. It was the result of drug companies' having their patented products, and knowing how to use the medical establishment for their own purposes, without regard to science. Their huge profits allowed them to spend several thousand dollars each year on each physician, sometimes including gifts of color television sets and free vacations, and discounts on things for the doctors' own use. Probably the most terrible use of their wealth was the gradual reversal of scientific opinion, achieved through grants to scientists who got the results they wanted, and cancellation of grants when the results went the wrong way, and through financial support for professional meetings and publications, and through influence on the editorial policies of medical journals by the threatened withholding of advertising.

Probably the last, strongest argument for the widespread use of estrogen is that it supposedly delays the development of osteoporosis. The absence of osteoporosis in old women in many other countries is never discussed in the professional meetings on osteoporosis subsidized by the drug companies. Constance Martin, in her ***Textbook of Endocrine Physiology,*** (1976), says that **"estrogens are not useful if administered over long periods of time...."** M.R. Urist (in ***Biochem. and Physiol. of Bone, vol.2,*** G.H. Bourne, 1972 ed.) says that estrogen doesn't restore bone mass "to a degree demonstrable by roentgenography," that excessive growth hormone "may aggravate" the disorder, and that estrogen stimulates the release of growth hormone. The argument for using estrogen to cure or prevent osteoporosis is based on the fact that estrogen causes diminished urinary excretion of calcium. A vitamin E deficiency (and estrogen is known to increase the need for vitamin E) causes calcium to be retained by muscles. Any toxin, in fact, causes calcium retention in the soft tissues — for example, when the heart is deprived of oxygen, it absorbs calcium. Since no skeletal improvement can be demonstrated by x-rays, I suspect that the improved calcium retention is merely a toxic effect of estrogen. A proper control in this sort of experiment would be to compare the effect of toxins such as iodoacetate and cyanide, with the effect of estrogen.

BLOOD PRESSURE - VITAMIN E AND OTHER NUTRIENTS

The kidneys produce a material which raises blood pressure, and the production of this chemical is increased when the supply of oxygen is not adequate. Other tissues probably produce similar chemicals. Normally, as soon as the blood pressure is increased, circulation is improved so that an adequate amount of oxygen is delivered to the tissues.