

Kids First

Let the Body Do the Work

YWe, as parents, have been carefully taught to be fearful whenever a child exhibits the manifestations of being sick. So have our children.

By the time your teenager reaches the age of 20, he or she has watched approximately 18,000 hours of drug commercials! Disturbing isn't it? Because the fact is that there's little profit in health but vast amounts in medical health "care." The pharmaceutical industries are very concerned about the use of "non-traditional" approaches to the restoration and preservation of health. The motivation? Profit and loss of market share. Enter a new line of "lifestyle" enhancing drugs. They're marketed to the public as "healthy," indispensable and even fun (I won't talk about the side-effects).

Let's look at Tums for a moment. In order to increase sales, Tums is marketed as good for you—because it now contains calcium. Have you ever heard of taking a drug in order to get your dietary load of a necessary mineral? My guess is that the makers of Tums simply "forgot" to mention that calcium is more readily available from the foods we eat. They also forgot to mention that Tums, as an antacid, removes acid from the stomach which is needed for calcium to be absorbed by the digestive tract!

This is an example of brilliant marketing and ordinary people have bought into it as health care. A frightening thought! But wait, there's more.

Have you seen the ads for Prozac? They suggest that in order to escape the drudgery of dealing with your children,

the laundry, grocery shopping and the myriad of daily chores of everyday life, you should develop a regular, weekly Prozac habit to help you cope. Isn't it a wonderful service the drug company is providing for the naive public?

We've been carefully led to believe that it's wise and beneficial to "treat" all your child's symptoms. There seems to be no weight given to the fact that the symptoms are there for a reason. There is a cause. What is called "sickness" may simply be an expression of health—a sign that your child's body may be doing exactly what it's programmed to do whenever it's invaded by some germ. The nervous system, that amazing master controller of your body, goes into high gear in order to restore law and order. That's the plan. Certain body functions are rerouted, changed, altered, enhanced, sometimes exaggerated, but all are under the perfect guidance of the super-computer that runs you.

I'm not saying that you have to like it when your body's "doing its thing," but ultimately it's for your health and benefit. What concerns me most is that there's no thought given to the idea that the body has an inborn potential for health. The point I want to make is that your child's symptoms are a sign that his body is actually fighting with something. As long as the battle is not being lost, don't interfere. Allow your child's body to learn how to deal with a health crisis on its own. There are instances though, where your child's body may need a bit of help if it is not coping with a health challenge well.



Many patients ask me about a child having diarrhea, for example, and panic because there has been all sorts of talk of dehydration.

Diarrhea occurs when the body is attempting to eliminate something in a hurry. For most cases though, it's usually self-limiting. If your child presents any of the following symptoms or the fever and diarrhea persist for more than two days and shows no sign of slowing down see your health-care provider: your child is in severe pain and cannot be comforted; is anxious or lethargic; whines continuously; has difficulty breathing, urinating or swallowing; or has an unexplained rash and a pulse rate of over 120 per minute. I will give you my recipe for a concoction which is very pleasant tasting for children and will deal with the issue of dehydration and essential electrolyte loss.

Mix one glass of orange juice with one glass of ginger ale, add a tablespoon of honey and a pinch of salt. This drink will reduce the fear of dehydration and replace needed electrolytes. ■

Ogi Ressel is a chiropractor in Burlington, Ont.