

POLLUTION & ITS RELATION TO DISEASE

A Personal Experience

This is based on the experiences described in Anna's Case.

SUBJECTS COVERED:

- Background
- Quandary
- Answer
- Family concern gets generalized
- Second Quandary
- References

It has been almost six months and over twenty visits to their offices since I began being treated by Dr. McCombs and Dr. Riniker. My progress has been such that I have hope again, not merely for improvement but for recovery. During that half year, I have had three cavitation surgeries for the removal of jawbone infections/cavitations, which were caused by root canals and gutta percha. (I anticipate at least one, perhaps as many as three more.) I have also had three root canals removed, and two quadrants of my mouth have seen mercury amalgam removed as well.

Within days of each dental procedure, I have noticed improvement in my health. My energy level has increased. My mind can focus much more easily. For the first time in over 30 years, I perspire. Being treated with Sanum remedies and stimulating my body to detoxify has also significantly impacted my well-being and stamina level.

One of the most troubling aspects of my treatment has been the discovery that I need to be detoxified for solvents and heavy metals. I could understand how my body became saturated with heavy metals, considering all of the mercury amalgam in my mouth leaching into the rest of my body. Yet I could not fathom how heavy metals and solvents, such as chromium and phenols, had become such a problem.

Since childhood, I have eaten vegetables from our garden, drank herb teas, milk from local cows, and lots of water, consumed meat in small amounts, and generally eaten organic foods with as few additives and preservatives as possible. I really enjoy cooking and have provided my children with the same diet as mine, being extremely careful, even before my health deteriorated so dramatically roughly nine years ago.

Having been a nurse for almost two decades, I thought might have something to do with my body's intense toxic condition. However, it really did not seem to be the answer. I wondered if this condition could somehow be linked to the environment. I had recently learned that I had grown up living near a toxic site, one listed by the federal government as a super fund site. (I lived adjacent to the site, a timber products site owned by J. H. Baxter, for eight years, and in the general area for a total approximating 30 years.)

On the evening of May 5, 1998, my quandary was answered. I was exploring this issue on the Web, went to a site, searched its database, and discovered an analysis of my hometown's (Weed, CA) super fund site. Listed there are the 56 toxic contaminants that were found in the air, soil, surface and ground water. These toxins include heavy metals and solvents such as chromium, various phenols, arsenic, creosote, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, and others, mostly carcinogenic.

Based on my personal knowledge of the city of Weed and environs and contacts I have maintained over the past decades, there has been a much higher mortality rate from cancer than the norm. In the hope that some of my old friends, classmates, associates, others who lived in the area, and individuals who have been similarly exposed might be able to use this resource, we have located what we believe to be the most current information on the Web. (It should be noted that the links from the 56 toxic contaminants do not have complete information on all of the toxic chemicals listed. We have attempted through this link -- part of the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency -- to complement that site's data.) If there is any additional or more current information available please contact us so that we might include it here. (Interestingly, there is one company bottling drinking water not too far from where I grew up and another in a nearby town -- Shasta, CA.)

The issue of cleaning up our environment takes on a sense of immediacy and importance for my family and me. Not only was I exposed and became but my two children as well. High school classmates of mine have died of breast cancer and kidney and brain tumors. The direct relationship between environmental pollution and personal health is incontrovertible to me. It is not merely a matter of longevity or quality of life, it is a question of life and death: for my children, my family, my friends and me who either live or have lived there. And what of those thousands and millions in similar situations around the world.

I feel we are all truly at risk. Our bodies are roughly 80% water, our brains 90%. Can any of the chemicals listed at "my" toxic site be filtered out of our water supply, even if we knew it was there? Is our drinking water tested for these toxins? What of the fruits and vegetables we eat? What is in the water that nurtured them, even if they are organic, let alone if they are not? What is in the meat and poultry we eat? What is the source of the water, grain, and other nutrients they consumed, even if they are free-range, and antibiotic and hormone free? How fast do these toxins break down, if at all? What are the long-term risks of genetically altered soy and corn that Monsanto is producing to withstand the application of Roundup™ that has caused such a furor in Europe, as recently reported on OPB the week of May 3, 1998.

What are the health risks to our children and us from exposure to pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, antibiotics and hormones in our food? It is a bitter irony that one can be highly conscientious about what one eats and drinks, be highly protective of that process with one's children, and become highly toxic nevertheless.

REFERENCES

Burchiel, Scott W. Ph.D.: invaluable resource on PAH's

Drinking Water Regulations: Environmental Protection Agency

Environmental Health Center

Environmental Web Directory

Environmental Search Engines

EPA site pollution map: identify areas of interest in the United States to determine what if any pollutants have been identified.

Hazardous Data Sensitivity Map: Excellent resource for locating hazardous sites and related information

Institute for Global Communications: international resource material on toxics with an extensive list of links

J. H. Baxter Super Fund Site Status

Material Safety Data Sheet: United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) require all manufacturers to issue Material Safety Data Sheets (also known as MSDS's)

Pesticide Facts

Sources for Pesticides & Agriculture Pollution

Superfund sites by state with and interactive map: Environmental Protection Agency

Toxicity Profiles: Risk Assessment Information System

TOXNET: an excellent compilation of databases from the U. S. Government, National Library of Medicine.