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## Naturopathy in Germany

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**There is a long tradition of naturopathy in Germany. Names such as Hahnemann, Hufeland, Kneipp have had a strong influence on generations of doctors and furthermore they still have a strong effect even to this day. Hahnemann's system of homeopathy is currently experiencing a renaissance. In higher and further education training schools for alternative practitioners rather than doctors are springing up all over the place. This boom in natural medicine and natural lifestyles will surely continue to increase rapidly. Here this development is accompanied by something of a predicament. There is a lack of scientific studies which unequivocally prove the effectiveness of the methods used. This is a point of contention which is continually raised by advocates of conventional medicine with regard to the methods used in naturopathy.**


The response that the many case studies and reports produced by advocates of naturopathy are just as important and just as meaningful is often countered by arguments about the non-reproducibility of the results. On the other hand a placebo-controlled randomized study cannot disguise the fact that an extraordinarily large number of so-called scientific studies have not helped the patients, but rather have left them continuing to suffer from their illnesses. A true doctor should above all focus on the patient regardless of the methods which were successfully used to treat him. Unfortunately this is frequently forgotten in the current dispute.

I have been a doctor for 45 years; I had begun to use naturopathy in my own panel practice more than 40 years ago and founded my own naturopathic hospital 30 years ago, which I still continue to run. What is special about this hospital, which has no less than 30 beds, is that we can work independently from any health insurance funds, insurance companies or any other sources of income such as the financial support system which is provided for civil servants in case of ill health. 80% of our patients pay for themselves and the hospital is continually booked up 4 months in advance. Many patients come for treatment every year and some come twice a year,

because they have noticed that they have regained some of their health by staying with us – something which subsidized medicine cannot provide them with.

This is a tremendous advantage for us, because we can work completely independently without being subject to any outside influences, restrictions and conditions, as long as our medical work is both correctly carried out and is also beyond any reproach. We do not depend on any subsidies whatsoever and we simply rely on our performance and the confidence of our patients. Every other person in charge of a hospital would envy me this independence, especially as the time spent on bureaucracy and red tape is negligible. For these reasons it is still enjoyable to work in medicine. The patient stands at the very centre of all our endeavours because the existence of our hospital depends upon his or her satisfaction.

We are continuing to largely operate in the field of naturopathy. We consider our methods to be the best possible way of avoiding sickness and of maintaining health. Conventional medicine is able to alleviate any health problems, to prevent any deterioration and to improve the quality of life. Their results are occasionally excellent, particularly in emergency medicine. Here people often speak of miracles.




Conventional medicine is however not in a position to achieve perfect health. It is also not in a position to present a plan which allows people to remain completely healthy or at least largely healthy. We, Germans are to a great extent a nation of sick people despite our unbelievably high degree of affluence. It is the same for the other highly developed countries. There must therefore be some mistakes taking place which prevent us from maintaining our health to a ripe old age.

In this presentation I intend to describe why naturopathy is indispensable in medicine, what the limitations of naturopathy are and how people can maintain an optimum level of health and receive optimum treatment for any illnesses.

Everyone is no doubt aware that preventative medicine represents the most cost-effective and patient friendly type of health provision. Prevention is the main area of activity in naturopathy. In this area we are unbeatable.

There are three significant organs or organ systems which are almost completely ignored by conventional medicine which do however play a central role in naturopathy. These are: the small intestine, connective tissue and the lymphatic system.

Please permit me to go through these three extraordinarily important systems in detail:



1) The small intestine: according to our knowledge of anatomy it is approximately the same length in adult human beings i.e. 4.50 m. According to various estimates the inner surface has an area of between 200 and 3000 m<sup>2</sup>. It is said that around 70 to 80% of all immunocompetent cells are formed there. The small intestine cannot be transplanted and it can also not be replaced by any machines such as are used in dialysis. Its complete removal is incompatible with human survival. On the other hand the kidneys, the liver, the heart, the pancreas, the large intestine and as far as I know all organs apart from the brain can be removed or else replaced by machines. The solar plexus is closely associated with the small intestine; it is also known as the 'abdominal brain'. The small intestine is therefore an extraordinary organ in every respect and exceeds all other organs apart from the brain in importance. Despite this it is largely overlooked in conventional medicine. There are hardly any diagnostic possibilities. There are reportedly no diseases of the small intestine, although with regard to its area it is by far the largest organ of the body and is irreplaceable. That is indeed quite remarkable. Please do ask your family doctor or ask your spe-

cialist in internal medicine what he or she can tell you about your small intestine. He or she will almost always answer that this part of the body is healthy because no diseases can be detected there. All these doctors are however mistaken. That is because there are today only a few people in highly developed countries who have healthy small intestines.


Information about diseases and disorders of the small intestine has been known about for a very long time. By and large it can be traced back to the Austrian physician, Franz Xaver Mayr (1875-1965) who published his principal work *The Foundations of the Diagnosis of Digestive Diseases (Fundamente zur Diagnostik der Verdauungskrankheiten)* as early as 1920. This book is a real treasure trove for anyone who wants to know more about the small intestine than can be learnt during one's education and training. Today it can still be bought as a reprint. In spite of this it remains almost unknown.

The small intestine is the main metabolic organ of the human body. Man does not live by what he eats, but rather by what he digests and this represents a fundamental difference. Any food that enters the small intestine can only be absorbed by the intestinal mucosa if it has been broken down to the finest molecular level i.e. carbohydrate can only be absorbed as mono-, di- or oligosaccharides, protein can only be absorbed in the form of amino acids or oligopeptides, and fats must be broken down to triglycerides.

All parts of the diet which cannot be absorbed by the intestinal mucosa are eliminated or else they are broken down.

For this reason non-absorbed carbohydrates are fermented. Here various alcohols are produced including methanol, ethanol, propanol and butanol. Fermentation in the small intestine is equivalent to having a 'minibrewery' in the abdomen. In particular what are known as fusel alcohols are highly toxic and must be metabolised by the liver. Because of the modern lifestyle many people in highly developed countries have to contend with fermentation in the small intestine (factors include high calorie, high carbohydrate food, and a lack of exercise). Proof of alcohol formation in the small intestine is difficult, but can be successfully carried out using sensitive methods of detection.


In my opinion fermentation in the small intestine is the main cause of diseases affecting highly developed countries. It cannot be remedied by using medication, by carrying out operations or by other medical procedures, but can only be cured



by means of behaviour modification which is orientated towards health.


Alcohol formation in the small intestine is associated with irritation of the upper intestinal mucosa. This causes 'leaky gut syndrome'. Here impurities present in the diet can permeate into the blood. It can also lead to autoimmune reactions, to food allergies and to many other disorders which are rarely considered in connection with the small intestine.

The continual formation of alcohol in the small intestine furthermore causes fatigue of the intestinal muscles which gradually become sluggish and become limp. As a result the contents of the small intestine can collect in the loose intestinal loops. This is similar to a stretch of water in a brook through which there is only a slight passage of water. The fermentation process is more intense in these parts of the intestine. This was especially true when no deep breathing was taking place because of a lack of exercise. As a result no spontaneous diaphragm-small intestine movements continued to take place. There is a continual cycle of disorders which cannot be broken by medical intervention. At best a treatment involving fasting reduces the incidence of this alcohol auto-intoxification, but the patient must undertake this voluntarily.



Protein fermentation in the intestine as a result of undigested proteins is similar to carbohydrate fermentation. Protein fermentation can be very easily detected in the urine using the indican test which has been used for over 100 years. In cases of protein fermentation, toxins such as skatole, putrescine and cadaverine are formed; their names alone indicate the development of a disease. The only effective treatment for this extremely important disorder of the small intestine derives from Franz Xaver Mayr and his successors: fasting, the best method is what is known as the Mayr Cure, exercises for the small intestine, deep breathing, very good eating habits and nutritional discipline. In this way people are gradually able to control this primary cause of chronic disorders and diseases. Only then can health be restored.

The complete problem cannot be solved medically. The main players are the patients themselves and the changes they make to their behaviour. They must once again take over responsibility for their health or for their illnesses.



2) The second organ system that is largely ignored by conventional medicine is the connective tissue. Here we are not just dealing with a

supporting or connecting organ. Rather the connective tissue is probably the main transit organ for most metabolic processes. It is probable that all substances (oxygen, glucose, hormones amongst others) which are intended to reach a cell in an organ must pass through the connective tissue. This tissue resembles a sponge. It only lets those substances pass through it which are isoosmotic, isoionic and isotonic. Substances which do not fulfil these criteria remain trapped in the sponge-like tissue. Sand or oil can also not pass through a sponge. A sponge becomes largely unusable as a result of sand and oil.


Similar processes take place when unsuitable substances in the blood want to pass through the connective tissue in the direction of the cells of the organ. They simply remain trapped there. In naturopathy we call this process bioaccumulation. This is an expression that makes the hairs of an orthodox medical practitioner stand on end. The processes taking place within the connective tissue have however in my opinion been unequivocally proved in German literature by Pischinger and Kellner in Vienna and by Heine in Frankfurt. These results have until now been largely ignored. They are however of fundamental importance.

As I have already said with increasing age more and more substances remain trapped within the connective tissue. Professor Heine also calls the network of polysaccharides in the matrix of the connective tissue a 'molecular sieve' in which any foreign proteins and undecomposed toxins which happen to be present for whatever reason are left trapped as what is known as 'metabolic garbage'. For Heine the connective tissue is therefore the 'metabolic dumping ground' of the body.

The aging processes are also partially responsible for the changes in the sol and gel states of the connective tissue and for the increasing thickening of the basal membrane of the capillaries.

These aging processes accompany a general reduction in fitness and decreased organ functions. These are of course dependent upon lifestyle and we can use this to affect the condition of the connective tissue; it is therefore also to a large extent dependent on the individual taking responsibility for his or her own health.


3) The third area that is criminally neglected by conventional medicine is the lymphatic system. The adult human is made up of around 70% water. The blood makes up around one seventh of this and the interstitial fluid and lymph around one third. The rest is intracellular fluid. Interstitial fluid transports nutrients from the capillaries to



the organ cells. All decomposition products from the cells are transported away by the lymph (except for chyle) and hence fed into the bloodstream.

But how does one treat the lymph? For this there are hardly any prescribed methods apart from a treatment involving the manual drainage of the lymph. The lymph does however mainly flow into the abdomen. Hundreds of lymph nodes are located in the intestinal wall, mesentery, mesocolon and the greater omentum. They are all important, as are the 100 to 200 lymph nodes in the neck. They purify the lymph. They are practically a 'waste disposal system'.

And who looks after the waste disposal facilities? No one. There is no doctor responsible for them. We doctors just let things take their course and hardly pay any attention at all to the small intestine, the connective tissue or the lymphatic system because we believe that these organs and systems can look after themselves. We know the score about our large intestine, and we also know the score about the heart, the kidneys and the pancreas and the liver, but we do not know about these three extremely important areas of the body. Why is this? That is because they evade our usual diagnostics. They can neither be diagnosed using laboratory data nor by imaging processes or electrical measurements. Here really important factors come into play, which determine whether we enjoy good health or ill health. We can only establish these disorders using our eyes, our hands and by using the acuteness of our minds. All our usual tried and tested diagnostics fail to work. There is also no conventional treatment concept which can be applied to the small intestine, the connective tissue or the lymphatic system. People are so naïve that they believe that care for these organs is not necessary.



That is however a huge mistake. Considerable amounts of toxins are formed in the small intestine each day. These toxins then gain entry into the lymph circulation and the intestinal capillaries and must then be excreted by the detoxifying organs – mainly the liver and the kidneys. Like a sponge the connective tissue gradually becomes choked with substances which cannot pass through the molecular sieve. In the long run the passage of nutrients, oxygen and other important substances is impeded. This is associated with aging and the continual weakening of all the organs. The lymphatic system gradually becomes equally overloaded because in the course of time problems arise with the waste disposal which cannot be treated by

ourselves as doctors.


This is where naturopathy begins. Here we frequently work using prophylactic measures: Kneipp showers, fasting or Mayr Cures, homeopathy and many other processes which take effect not only on the organs mentioned above, but also on the whole body and frequently lead to a fundamental improvement e.g. toxin formation in the small intestine is reduced by eating slowly, chewing the food well, eating small amounts of food and regular eating habits. By testing for food allergies using blood tests or by using bioresonance techniques, any foodstuffs that are causing problems can be found and avoided for a period of time. The complaint can then be treated using measures that are specifically targeted to deal with it. The lymphatic system in the small intestine is activated using special abdominal treatments resulting in improved elimination of toxins.

The following example is intended to demonstrate the connections between these ideas.

During a course for doctors training to become Mayr doctors, an abdominal examination was carried out on a young female colleague using Mayr's techniques. The colleague had to expose her upper body and she therefore had to also remove her brassiere. The distance from the suprasternal notch to each of the nipples was measured along with the distance between the nipples. The course leader then carried out the abdominal therapy described above for around 15 minutes. The distances previously mentioned were again measured. Not only the distance from the suprasternal notch to the nipples, but also the distance between the nipples was in each case 1 cm shorter. What had happened? Because of the abdominal treatment the toxin level in the lymphatic system in the small intestine had become reduced. The previously relaxed elastic fibres in the breasts had been able to recover and had again become toned. As a result the breasts had again become less inclined to sag.

For me this observation had been inspirational. By means of a short manual treatment of the abdomen the toxin level had decreased and the skin had again recovered. It was an impressive result and had been a fantastic experience.

There are currently tremendous developments taking place in naturopathy in Germany, particularly in the field of 'energetic medicine'. We perform AK (applied kinesiology), use magnetic fields, apply acupuncture, use homeopathy, etc. We establish if there are any stresses originating for geopathic reasons e.g.




underground watercourses or electrical oscillations and help people to avoid these sources of stress. As a result the frequency of illnesses is frequently drastically reduced. According to our experience disorders caused by underground watercourses contributed to cancer in over 90% of cases.

Neurodermatitis almost always arises as a result of food allergies. By avoiding all allergenic foodstuffs, the neurodermatitis often completely disappears within a few weeks.

We are able to stimulate the immune system using simple methods. As a result the susceptibility to infection is reduced, antibiotics are necessary less frequently and days sick or otherwise absent from work and school are lower. In this way health care costs are reduced.

In our experience pain originates as a result of nutritional disorders affecting the relevant nerves. These disorders can be of mechanical, toxicological or nutritional origins. If one finds the causes, then the pains disappear. In this way remedial treatment for sciatica, lumbago, headaches, fibromyalgia, gonalgia, coxalgia and many other complaints is relatively simple. The causes are almost always nutritional disorders of the affected nerves. Furthermore migraine, an increasingly more frequent illness, can frequently be remedied in this way.



We now know that in outpatients around 80% of all diseases can receive good treatment using naturopathy at around 10 to 20 % of the costs. However the consistent cooperation of the patient is essential. The patient must accept responsibility for his or her health, because he or she is a 'mature' patient. The doctor helps the patient to obtain this health in the best possible way.

Naturopathy usually has an outstanding effect on all functional disorders, as long as no serious anatomical damage has developed. Very good help can generally be provided using naturopathy before an operation becomes necessary or before continuous medication becomes (or has to become) necessary e.g. antihypertensives, antidiabetics, antirheumatics. Naturopathy is not a complementary or alternative medicine. Instead it is medicine for maintaining health, for the optimisation of the quality of life and for sustaining one's zest for life. When first used at an early stage and when used consistently it costs very little and maintains good health well into the patients' advancing years.

Health is a precious gift. It is a shame how few people are in the position to achieve it and are really prepared to do so, even though we have the

knowledge available about the rules to be followed for good health. However people's complacency and the opposition of large professional groups prevent consistent teaching and compliance with these rules of health. As a result people are becoming increasingly more unwell, the system is becoming increasingly more expensive and the need is becoming greater and greater. Only when each individual again takes responsibility for his or her own health will there be a change in this predicament.

We, as naturopathic doctors in Germany consider our medicine to be a fantastic way of helping people in need. We really enjoy our work and we are proud to tell of the diagnostic and therapeutic possibilities that are open to us. We intervene before our patients descend into health chaos. We can also help them in a largely effective way that is free from side effects.

Naturopathy mainly provides good to very good help with what are known as functional disorders, if no severe anatomical changes have occurred. Pains, inflammations, most skin diseases, problems affecting the patients' feeling of well being etc. are areas for the use of naturopathic medicine. If however severe anatomical changes have occurred such as cataracts, severe arthritis, cardiac infarction, arteriosclerosis, Parkinson's disease amongst others, then by and large it is still orthodox medicine which alone can be of help.

Also with life-threatening diseases (severe infections, pneumonia, nephritis, accidents) then orthodox medicine is always preferred on account of its speed and its relatively reliable effects. A severe anatomical change does however almost always begin with minor functional disorders. Life-threatening diseases do not occur that frequently in outpatients work. That is why naturopathy should almost always be there at the start of treatment.

**There really is enough work for both areas of medicine.**

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