

# Book Reviews

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Vitamin C, Infectious Diseases,  
and Toxins: Curing the Incurable  
Thomas E. Levy, M.D., J.D.  
Xlibris Corp. 2002 451 pages

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The effectiveness and safety of large-dose vitamin C therapy should be, by now, yesterday's news. Yet I never cease to be amazed at the number of people who remain unaware that vitamin C is the best broad-spectrum antibiotic, antihistamine, antitoxic and antiviral substance there is. Equally surprising is the ease with which some people, most of the medical profession, and virtually all of the media have been convinced that, somehow, vitamin C is not only ineffective but is also downright dangerous. Therefore I am always glad to find yet another impeccably qualified physician who publishes to set things straight. Thomas E. Levy, a practicing physician for 25 years, is a board-certified internist and a fellow of the American College of Cardiology. He is also an attorney. What's more, he's a really fine writer. Dr. Levy's book, *Vitamin C, Infectious Diseases, and Toxins: Curing the Incurable* has immediately made my most select list of absolutely required reading.

That list is rather short, and here's why. When you pick up a health or nutrition book and need to know really fast if it is any good or not, just look for these three key words: Klenner, Stone, and Pauling. If a book has negative things to say about Linus Pauling, you are not likely to find a fair hearing for vitamins. Irwin Stone, the biochemist who first put Pauling onto vitamin C, is the author of *The Healing Factor: Vitamin C Against Disease* (1972). Pauling cites Stone thirteen times in his landmark *How to Live Longer and Feel Better* (1986), a recommendation if there ever was one. But the key figure, chest specialist and ascorbic acid high dose pioneer Frederick R. Klenner, M.D., is usually omitted entirely from most orthodox nutrition, health or

medical texts. To me, that is tantamount to deleting all the Shakespeare from an English Lit course. The importance of Klenner's clinical observations showing vitamin C's power against infectious and chronic disease is extraordinary. Dr. Levy intends that you become familiar with Klenner's work, and *Vitamin C, Infectious Diseases, and Toxins* accomplishes this purpose with distinction.

Without hedging, Dr. Levy explains why, even in his subtitle, he uses the word "cure" as boldly as Dr. Klenner ever did:

"It is completely appropriate to use the term "cure" when, in fact, the evidence demonstrates that a given medical condition has clearly and repeatedly been cured by a specific therapy. . . Avoiding the use of a term such as "cure" when it is absolutely appropriate does as much harm as using it inappropriately. Not realizing the incredible ability of vitamin C to cure a given infectious disease just perpetuates the usage of so many other needlessly applied toxic drugs and clinical protocols. If the shoe fits, wear it, and if the treatment works, proclaim it." (p 15)

Knowing full well how the medical profession will react to such statements, Dr. Levy writes:

"Unquestioning faith in the "established" medical knowledge is so deeply ingrained that many doctors simply will not even consider reading something that comes from sources that they do not consider worthy of producing new medical concepts. And if they do...they quickly dismiss it as just being ridiculous if it conflicts with too many of the concepts that most of their colleagues and textbooks embrace." (p 22)

Because there are few families that will not be affected by serious infectious illness, the individual topics Dr. Levy addresses (in Chapter 2) are especially important. These include measles, mumps, viral encephalitis, herpes, mononucleosis, viral pneumonia, chickenpox, Ebola, and of course influenza. He has included a fairly

lengthy section on AIDS. Rabies is an intriguing entry, even to those already willing to concede that vitamin C is an effective antiviral.

Non-viral diseases discussed include diphtheria, tuberculosis (in considerable detail), strep, brucellosis, typhoid, dysentery, malaria, trichinosis, and the always-controversial subjects of tetanus and pertussis. Not unexpectedly, Dr. Levy seems to incline towards the non-traditional viewpoint on vaccination, although since the book lacks an index, his statements on this specific subject take a moment to locate. As vitamin C is such a good antibiotic and antiviral, a de-emphasis on vaccination can be seen to make sense.

Ascorbic acid, that Swiss Army knife among nutrients, has been unjustly dismissed in part because of the implausibility of such very great utility. A human body of tens of trillions of cells operates thousands of biochemical reactions on less than a dozen vitamins. Is it so very surprising that one nutrient would have so many benefits?

"The Ultimate Antidote" (Chapter 3) considers vitamin C as an antitoxin. This chapter will, as Mark Twain put it, gratify some and astonish the rest. The effects of alcohol, the barbiturates, carbon monoxide, cyanide, aflatoxin, a variety of environmental poisons including pesticides, even acetaminophen poisoning in cats, mushroom poisoning, and snake venoms are all shown to respond to large doses of vitamin C. Mercury, lead, and the effects of radiation receive special and really eye-opening attention.

If there is a greater calling than healing the sick, it is teaching people how to heal themselves. Abram Hoffer and Lendon H. Smith are perhaps the two foremost examples of physician-authors who have focused on directly instructing their readers how to use high dosages of vitamins correctly and directly. I think Dr. Levy is another of these natural born teachers, and this may be most apparent in the book's section of "Practical Suggestions"

(Chapter 5). General readers, having just learned that high oral doses of ascorbate are effective for self-medication, will appreciate receiving the benefits of Dr. Levy's professional experience. Physician readers will especially welcome his injection instructions. I would like to see this important chapter greatly expanded.

A book this good deserves a more eye-catching, upscale cover to attract bookshelf attention and get to those who most need it. I hope the next edition will also add some visual aids. Opponents to medical use of vitamin C will almost certainly demand expansion of Chapter 4 ("The Safety of High Doses of Vitamin C") to include more negative studies and more commentary on possible negative effects of massive doses of ascorbate. Dr. Levy does in fact devote considerable attention to hemochromatosis, immune system concerns, G6PD deficiency, allegations of DNA damage and kidney stone formation, the rebound effect, and vitamin C's pro-oxidant characteristics. I doubt if any chapter of any length would satisfy vitamin therapy's harshest critics. In Levy's book, there is a welcome emphasis on the positive side of large doses of vitamin C, and that is their power to cure the sick. Cure is by far the best word in medicine. It would seem that you cannot spell "cure" without "C." There is no doubt whatsoever that Klenner would wholeheartedly approve of Levy stating: "The three most important considerations in effective vitamin C therapy are 'dose, dose, and dose.' If you don't take enough, you won't get the desired effects. Period!" (p.36)

Dr. Levy's book presents clear evidence that vitamin C cures disease. It contains over 1,200 scientific references, presented chapter by chapter. It does not mince words. It is disease specific. It is dose specific. It is practical. It is readable. It is excellent.

—Andrew W. Saul