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On The COVER

STAYING MENTALLY SHARP

A New Study Preventing Mental Incapacity with Hydergine

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Staying Mentally Sharp

Hydergine is approved by the Food and Drug Administration to treat individuals over the age of 60 who manifest signs or symptoms of mental incapacity. However, when one study showed that Hydergine was not effective in treating Alzheimer's disease, American physicians virtually stopped prescribing it, even though the drug was never approved as an Alzheimer's therapy.

Nevertheless, Hydergine remains a popular supplement among health-conscious people seeking to slow age-related mental decline. Recent studies reveal new mechanisms by which Hydergine protects against brain aging. The latest study, published in *European Neuropsychopharmacology* (1998, Vol. 8, Iss. 1, pages 13-16), showed that Hydergine causes an increase of superoxide dismutase (SOD) and catalase in the brain, the body's natural antioxidants and among the most effective free radical scavengers.

What was interesting about this study is that Hydergine was administered for only 20 days, but its effects in the brains of the lab rats were dramatic. Hydergine specifically increased catalase levels in the brain, as well as SOD in the hippocampus and in the corpus striatum regions. Those regions of the brain suffer severe oxidative damage from hydrogen peroxide and other free-radical generating agents. Orally ingested SOD and catalase have not proven efficacious because these antioxidant enzymes are broken down in the stomach, so scientists have concentrated on ways of prompting the body to produce its own cellular SOD and catalase. This study showed that Hydergine can increase brain levels of SOD and catalase after only short-term administration.

Hydergine also appears to safely inhibit toxic monoamine oxidase levels. Elevated MAO levels damage brain cells and are a specific cause of age-related neuronal deterioration. Too much MAO has also been shown to cause pathological disorders such as Parkinson's disease. Age-related depression has been linked to excessive production of MAO that occurs in the elderly. Drugs that inhibit MAO were widely used in the past to effectively treat depression. MAO-inhibiting drugs are seldom used today because of potential toxicity.

The scientists who conducted this study concluded, "Decreasing MAO levels and supporting the antioxidant enzymes may underlie the efficacy of Hydergine in the treatment of age-related cognitive decline."

In a study published in *Life Sciences* (Vol 58, No. 8, 1996), it was shown that Hydergine protects against brain aging and the development of Alzheimer's disease. This study identified a defect that occurs in brain cell membranes and showed that Hydergine could inhibit these degenerative changes.

The scientists who authored the *Life Sciences* study identified specific antibodies that bind to brain-cell membranes and then target the cell for destruction and removal by the immune system. (Young brains have significantly lower levels of these destructive antibodies compared with old brains.) Hydergine-treated mice showed a reduction in these destructive antibodies, thus suggesting that middle-aged people who take Hydergine could retard the development of senile dementia caused by programmed immune destruction.

The animals receiving Hydergine in middle-age maintained healthy brain cell-metabolic activities, compared with the control group who did not receive Hydergine. The scientists concluded that Hydergine therapy begun in middle age could protect against the initiation of the cascade that leads to Alzheimer's disease.

The scientists emphasized that once the Alzheimer's disease cascade begins, Hydergine would be of little value since the brain cells have already been inevitably marked and targeted for immune destruction.

The Life Extension Foundation has long advocated the use of Hydergine by people of all ages to prevent the degenerative changes that lead to brain cell aging and Alzheimer's disease. In addition, Hydergine appears frequently in the scientific literature as therapy for a wide range of diseases ranging from asthma to stroke. Earlier published studies showed that Hydergine can:

- Improve blood supply to the brain
- Increase the amount of oxygen delivered to the brain
- Increase oxygen use by the brain
- Enhance metabolism in brain cells
- Protect the brain from damage during periods of decreased and/or insufficient oxygen supply
- Lower the deposit of age pigment (lipofuscin) in the brain
- Prevent free radical damage in brain cells
- Increase intelligence, memory, learning, and recall
- Enhance the use of glucose by brain cells
- Increase ATP levels in the brain
- Stop blood from becoming sticky
- Raise the brain levels of serotonin

If you need a medication like Hydergine that is difficult or expensive to obtain in the U.S., consider ordering that medication from an offshore company. For a free directory of offshore companies that ship to American citizens for personal use, write to: International Society of Free Choice, 9 Dubnoc Street, 64368, Tel Aviv, Israel.

Continuation of article:
Brain Boosting: A Family Affair

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