

# Iodine's Crucial Role in Health: A Review of an Unforgettable Gathering of Experts

by David Brownstein, MD

**W**ith an estimated 95 percent of individuals deficient in iodine, I thought it is important to inform you about a recent conference that spotlighted this essential mineral. The conference, titled "Recent Advances in the Use of Iodine in Medical Practice" was a two-day gathering of many of the leaders in the iodine field recently held in Scottsdale, Arizona.

The information presented on Day 1 of the iodine conference was astonishing. I was amazed that people would come from all over the country to hear about one single nutrient. The question and answer session lasted for more than 2 hours—the longest Q & A session I have ever been involved in. I think the Q and A session was an indication about how high the interest is in iodine.

Numerous speakers at the conference each brought their own unique perspective on the use of iodine. Dr. Guy Abraham, my mentor on iodine, was the lead speaker. Dr. Abraham gave an eloquent presentation on the history of iodine and why it is still so important in the modern-day diet. Dr. Abraham presented new information that higher doses of iodine, between 50-100 mg per day may be necessary to decrease oxidative DNA damage. He also showed us why the low RDA doses of iodine are ineffective and have no anti-cancer effect in the body.

In addition to Dr. Abraham's intriguing presentation, the conference also featured Dr. Jorge Flechas. Dr. Flechas presented his laboratory information that illustrated the widespread deficiency of iodine. He has tested thousands of samples from patients all over the country and found consistently that over 95 percent of people are iodine deficient. In my office, my partners and I have found similar results: more than 95 percent of patients we have tested are severely iodine deficient. In fact, most of my lab tests show people have nearly undetectable iodine levels in their body.

My numbers correlate very closely with Dr. Flechas' numbers. At the conference, I presented information on my use of iodine in a clinical setting. I showed the audience that iodine deficiency is real and still occurring today.

Learning more about iodine's role in our health is one of the most important things we can do because iodine deficiency is the underlying problem—or one of the main problems—responsible for the high rate of cancer (particularly breast, lung, prostate and ovary) as well as the high rate of autoimmune disorders we are seeing in this country.

Day 1 of this conference was truly one of the most stimulating days at a medical meeting. It brought to the forefront the very real concern that iodine deficiency is truly a national problem.

## Breast Health, Fluoride Toxicity and Iodine

The second day of the iodine conference started with Bernard Eskin, M.D. Dr. Eskin is professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology from Drexel University. He has published more than 100 peer-reviewed papers and studied iodine for nearly 50 years. Dr. Eskin presented a wealth of information on iodine and its relationship to breast cancer. It is well known that iodine deficiency results in goiter or a larger thyroid volume and Dr. Eskin showed research correlating increased thyroid volume in women with breast cancer. He also showed us his own earlier research where iodine concentrated in the ducts of the breast, the area most commonly affected by breast cancer. He also presented newer research showing how iodine is used by the breast. He made it clear iodine deficiency induces the earliest form of malignant changes in the breast—dysplasia. Iodine deficiency also makes existing cancer more aggressive. He presented research that iodine deficiency increases the size of breast tumors, while iodine replacement reduces their size. Iodine was also shown to inhibit tumor

proliferation and to modulate the estrogen receptors in the breast and lessen negative estrogen influence on cancer formation and the spread of cancer cells. The presentation was so informative that it made me realize that even someone like myself, who has immersed himself in the study of iodine, still has a lot to learn.

Day 2 of the iodine conference continued with Dr. Donald Miller. Dr. Miller is a professor of surgery at the University of Washington School of Medicine. I became acquainted with Dr. Miller by reading an article in the *Journal of the American Association of Physicians and Surgeons* (Miller DW. Extrathyroidal Benefits of Iodine. *Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons* 2006;11(4-Winter):106-110). This article was Dr. Miller's review of the benefits of iodine supplementation. I highly recommend this article to anyone interested in more information on iodine. It is available at his website: [www.donaldmiller.com](http://www.donaldmiller.com).

Dr. Miller presented information on fluoride and its relationship to iodine. He discussed the research calling into question the benefits of water fluoridation and quoted a study from the WHO showing that there is no difference between fluoridated and unfluoridated countries in the tooth decay rate. A huge number of our children (more than 30 percent according to the CDC) are currently being affected by fluoride poisoning, which can manifest as dental fluorosis. He also reviewed the manifestations of fluoride poisoning that include arthritis, osteoporosis, Alzheimer's disease, and an increased risk of cancer.

Next, Dr. Miller reviewed the scope of iodine deficiency and the consequences when we are not obtaining enough of this mineral. He presented information showing iodine functions as a strong antioxidant. Iodine was also shown to induce death in lung cancer cells. Another important part of Dr. Miller's presentation was a com-

*Continued on page 16*

# Iodine's Role

*Continued from page 5*

parison between the iodine intake in the U.S. and Japan. What is the consequence of the Japanese ingesting more than 100 times the iodine as the average American? A lowered rate of breast cancer, a much better life expectancy and a lower infant mortality rate.

Dr. Miller's presentation was a wonderful overview of the benefits of iodine. I thoroughly enjoyed his long discussion on the dangers of adding fluoride to the water supply.

After lunch, Dr. William Shevin spoke on his Clinical Experience with Orthoiodosupplementation. Dr. Shevin started his talk with showing what has happened to the radioactive iodine released from

nuclear tests and accidents. He showed that radioactive iodine has penetrated nearly every area of this country from testing done in Nevada. He presented his clinical experience With testing and treating 186 patients. He reported that 71.5 percent showed "unequivocable improvement," 15.6 percent had improvement, while 4.8 percent reported negative reactions and 8.1 percent of his patients noted no change. The three case histories he presented were highly informative. The most interesting part of the case histories (at least to me) was when he showed how he treated a detox reaction from iodine with sea salt. Dr. Shevin reported from the literature that salt was the treatment of choice to treat bromine toxicity from years past. Many people are exposed to bromine through dietary sources. He felt that iodine use in some will trigger a bromine detox reaction

that can be managed by using more sea salt in the diet. I have found similar results in my practice. Dr. Shevin also showed a video of his patients' responses to iodine. I found his talk stimulating, and it provided a lot of useful clinical information on iodine supplementation.

**Glenn Ozalan, NMD, and Vimal Patel, RPh** gave the final lecture. They presented useful information on how to detoxify the body. They also presented their clinical information on the use of iodine as part of a detoxification plan.

I thought the first iodine conference was truly a special event. I learned a tremendous amount and cannot wait until the next conference. Meanwhile, for those of you who were unable to attend, I highly recommend the DVD that recaptures all these fascinating presentations.

# Phytonutrient Protection

*Continued from page 8*

curcumin (turmeric), and red wine/resveratrol all have been shown to prevent or reduce sun damage. Supplementing with a formula that combines all these phytonutrients can synergistically preserve skin health.

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# The Most Nutritious Diet for Pets

As the recall of dog and cat food winds down, it might be good to remember there have been 3 recalls in the human food industry in the past 5 years: spinach, packaged meats and peanut butter. Hopefully, that will put a little perspective on the problem we have been facing with the pet food. However, there are steps we should con-

sider taking now to ensure our pets receive the healthiest nutrition possible.

First, regardless of the type of food fed, pet owners can ensure their animal is receiving optimal nutrition by offering them Natural Whole Food Concentrate for Dogs. In addition, Dog Vites and Cat Vites are an excellent vitamin-mineral supplement for pets.

Pet owners who are concerned about the quality of standard wet or dry packaged food can consider cooking for their pets. This is often a good way to ensure our animals obtain the correct nutrients.

*To read the rest of this article please go to [www.vrppet.com](http://www.vrppet.com)*