

Letters to the Editor



Rx ONLY

Berocca[®] Plus TABLETS

THE MULTIVITAMIN/MINERAL FORMULATION

Before prescribing, please consult complete product information, a summary of which follows:

Each Berocca[®] Plus tablet contains 5000 IU vitamin A (as vitamin A acetate), 30 IU vitamin E (as *dl*-alpha tocopheryl acetate), 500 mg vitamin C (ascorbic acid), 20 mg vitamin B₁ (as thiamine mononitrate), 20 mg vitamin B₂ (riboflavin), 100 mg niacin (as niacinamide), 25 mg vitamin B₆ (as pyridoxine HCl), 0.15 mg biotin, 25 mg pantothenic acid (as calcium pantothenate), 0.8 mg folic acid, 50 mcg vitamin B₁₂ (cyanocobalamin), 27 mg iron (as ferrous fumarate), 0.1 mg chromium (as chromium nitrate), 50 mg magnesium (as magnesium oxide), 5 mg manganese (as manganese dioxide), 3 mg copper (as cupric oxide), 22.5 mg zinc (as zinc oxide).

Indications: Prophylactic or therapeutic nutritional supplementation in physiologically stressful conditions, including conditions causing depletion, or reduced absorption or bioavailability of essential vitamins and minerals; certain conditions resulting from severe B-vitamin or ascorbic acid deficiency; or conditions resulting in increased needs for essential vitamins and minerals.

Contraindications: Hypersensitivity to any component.

Warnings: Not for pernicious anemia or other megaloblastic anemias where vitamin B₁₂ is deficient. Neurologic involvement may develop or progress, despite temporary remission of anemia, in patients with vitamin B₁₂ deficiency who receive supplemental folic acid and who are inadequately treated with B₁₂.

Precautions: *General:* Certain conditions may require additional nutritional supplementation. During pregnancy, supplementation with vitamin D and calcium may be required. Not intended for treatment of severe specific deficiencies. *Information for the Patient:* Toxic reactions have been reported with injudicious use of certain vitamins and minerals. Urge patients to follow specific dosage instructions. Keep out of reach of children.

Drug and Treatment Interactions: As little as 5 mg pyridoxine daily can decrease the efficacy of levodopa in the treatment of parkinsonism. Not recommended for patients undergoing such therapy.

Adverse Reactions: Adverse reactions have been reported with specific vitamins and minerals, but generally at levels substantially higher than those in Berocca Plus. However, allergic and idiosyncratic reactions are possible at lower levels. Iron, even at the usual recommended levels, has been associated with gastrointestinal intolerance in some patients.

Dosage and Administration: Usual adult dosage: one tablet daily. Not recommended for children. Available on prescription only.

How Supplied: Golden yellow, capsule-shaped tablets—bottles of 100.

ROCHE

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The Journal welcomes Letters to the Editor; if found suitable, they will be published as space allows. Letters should be typed double-spaced, should not exceed 400 words, and are subject to abridgment and other editorial changes in accordance with journal style.

Side Effects and Toxicity of Lithium

To the Editor:

In an article by Apter et al (*Apter JT, Apter AS, Tyano S: Side effects and toxicity of lithium. J Fam Pract 15:1101, 1982*) that appeared in the December 1982 issue of the Journal, no mention was made of the dosages of the drugs administered.

What were the doses of lithium used in patients when toxic effects and numerous side effects were observed? Had the dose of lithium administered any bearing to the toxicity? Did toxicity or undesirable side effects occur even with the minimal maintenance doses of lithium, say 300 to 600 mg/d?

D.A. Berberian, MD
Loudonville, New York

The preceding letter was referred to Dr. Apter, who responds as follows:

In reply to Dr. Berberian, the article on lithium side effects mentions the importance of keeping the patient on the lowest dose of lithium possible to achieve therapeutic effect. Lithium is generally very well tolerated, and the major side effects are minimal compared with the therapeutic benefits. As mentioned in my article, patients can be maintained at blood levels as low as .4 mEq/L. Blood level is not direct-

ly related to the number of milligrams given and must be individualized for each patient.

The most serious side effects are mainly associated with lithium poisoning and are very rare at therapeutic serum levels. Side effects, especially hand tremor and polydipsia, may be seen at levels within the therapeutic range.

Jeffrey T. Apter, MD
Princeton Lithium and
Affective Disorders Clinic
Belle Mead, New Jersey

Legal Status of Vasectomy

To the Editor:

Your February issue contained an excellent article on vasectomy by Drs. Brownlee and Tibbels (*Brownlee JH, Tibbels CK: Vasectomy. J Fam Pract 16:379, 1983*). However, the article included some incorrect information on Utah laws as they relate to voluntary sterilization.

Please note that "... Utah's law places no restriction upon the right of individuals to have ... a sterilization operation if they so desire." *Parker v Rampton, 28 Utah 2d 36, 497 P. 2d 848 (1972).*

Miriam Ruben
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