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AROUND AND ABOUT

The magic VITAMIN

Dr Joseph Chandy Kayalackakom, who is based in Britain, has been administering B12 injections which has led to a dramatic improvement in the health of his patients



My best witnesses are my patients. Talk to them and they will vouch for the effectiveness of my treatment

IN a BBC One documentary 'Inside Out', which can be seen on You Tube, Catherine Icteton of Horden, Britain, had been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. "I could not see or walk properly," says the mother of two. "My life had come to a standstill." Seven years went past.

In August, 2006, she came under the care of the Pala-born Dr Joseph Chandy Kayalackakom, the general physician in the National Health Service (NHS) at Horden. "As soon as I saw her I knew she had a Vitamin B12 deficiency," he says. A blood test

revealed that Catherine had a B12 level of 175 nanogram per litre (ng/l). This was far lower than the normal 500 to 1000 ng/l. Immediately Chandy put her on 1000 mg injections every day. Within a few weeks, Catherine was able to walk and her eyesight was restored. "The nightmare was over," she says.

The Vitamin B12 deficiency is little known. Chandy stumbled over it by accident. In 1966, at the Medical College in Alappuzha, he came across patients who suffered from multiple sclerosis and other neurological disorders. On a sudden inspiration, he checked

their Vitamin B12 levels and discovered that it was very low. He began giving injections and the patients improved quickly. Interestingly, all the patients were vegetarians but that did not surprise Chandy.

"The B 12 vitamin can only be obtained from red and white meat, milk, eggs and fish," says the doctor who was on a brief visit to Kochi. "So there is a strong likelihood that vegetarians could have this deficiency."

Apart from the drawbacks of a vegetarian diet, many people lack an enzyme in the stomach which helps to absorb the B12. "It is for this reason that among meat-eating Caucasians, 20 to 40 percent of the population suffers from a B12 deficiency," says Chandy. The absence of this enzyme can be a genetic trait. "That

with a count of 300 ng/l. So he was barred from administering the B12 by the Primary Care Trust (which is a part of the NHS). Immediately, some patients, who were suffering from multiple sclerosis, went back to their wheelchairs because of the lack of the vitamin.

"I would have been sacked a long time ago but I had kept meticulous records of my patients over the years," he says. Now the Primary Care Trust has allowed Dr Chandy to continue, having realised there is nothing wrong with his treatment. The doctor says that it is a lack of awareness in the medical fraternity that has caused so much of problems. "My best witnesses are my patients," he says. "Talk to them and they will vouch for the effectiveness of my treatment."

In Kochi, Thomas George (name changed) had suffered from a debilitating nerve condition. Thomas had an accidental meeting with Dr Chandy on his visit a few months ago. A blood test revealed a figure of 175 ng/l for B12. The doctor immediately recommended injections. "I was skeptical," says Thomas. But he did a lot of research on the Internet and was finally convinced. After two months of injections, the tremors have stopped. "My health has improved remarkably," says Thomas.

Now, after 30 years, Dr Chandy is finally receiving recognition for his work. In September, the India International Friendship Society conferred their 'Glory of India' award on him for his outstanding contribution to Britain. On November 19, Prime Minister David Cameron invited Dr Chandy, along with several other prominent Asians, to celebrate Diwali at 10 Downing Street. And he took the opportunity to tell Cameron about the miracle vitamin.

To know more about Vitamin B12, check out Dr Chandy's website www.b12d.org.

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Passing by

means that if a mother lacks it, there is a strong possibility that her children will also be B12 deficient," he says.

What are the symptoms of this deficiency? "Tiredness, extreme fatigue, depression and low moods," says Chandy. "Other signs include dizziness, hair loss, numbness in the hands and feet, mouth ulcers, palpitations of the heart, diarrhoea and blurred vision. "It affects every gland and system," he says.

Incidentally, 80 percent of Chandy's patients are women. "They have more glands than men," he says. "They have breasts, ovaries and the uterus. Women have menstrual periods and menopause and they go through childbirth. All these adjustments causes disturbance in the metabolism. So they are more vulnerable." Not everybody was convinced about this diagnosis of Dr Chandy. In the NHS the rule is that Vitamin B12 treatment can be prescribed only if the deficiency is 150 ng/l but the doctor was treating patients even

OTHER STORIES



A C Xavier, managing director, AC City Builders, receiving the Junior Chamber International Metro Chapter's business excellence award from Mayor Tony Chammany

WORKSHOP INAUGURATED

K Madhavan Nair, chief commissioner, Income Tax, Kochi, inaugurated the workshop on 'Gateway to financial freedom' organised by the Amrita School of Business and Hedge Equities. Swami Poornamritananda Puri, general secretary, Mata Amritanandamayi Math, Alex Babu, managing director, Hedge Equities, Dr Prem Nair, medical director, AIMS, Dr Sanjay Banerji, dean, Amrita School of Business, Dr G Kalyanaram, dean advisory, Amrita School of Business, C Parameswaran, director, corporate and international relations, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham and Sunanda Muralidharan, chairperson, Amrita School of Business, were also present.

SMIRNOFF NIGHTLIFE EXCHANGE PROJECT HELD

Kochi celebrated Canada's nightlife culture at Royale Club on December 18 as part of the Smirnoff Nightlife Exchange Project in which 14 countries paired up to exchange the best of their local nightlife. The countries taking part — India, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Germany, UK, Ireland, Lebanon, Poland, South Africa, Thailand, USA and Venezuela — were given the chance to exchange and experience the best of nightlife from around the world. India swapped its nightlife with Canada and Canadian nightlife was showcased in the exotic Smirnoff cocktails, the ice theme décor elements of the venue and the music. Guests in Kochi were treated to the ultimate pulsating music experience with Canadian electronica star Steve Duda and DJ Breed from India. Fans also got to relish the much-loved Canadian specialty poutine and got a taste of Canada with the Smirnoff Canadian Spectrum and the Smirnoff Toronto Mule that was created by world renowned mixologist Kenji Jesse to celebrate the Smirnoff Nightlife Exchange Project.