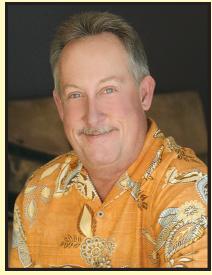


KIDS FIRST



Ritalin; Over-prescribed and Dangerous

As many as 100% of all children in second through fifth grade in some schools have been prescribed the drug Ritalin, even though many of them probably don't have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). That was the conclusion of researchers who published their findings in the *American Journal of Public Health*.

According to Dr. LeFever, doctors are over prescribing Ritalin, which is a psychometric drug and a Class II narcotic. "It's hard to believe this many children have the specific brain-related problem called ADHD," stated Dr. LeFever, an assistant professor of pediatrics and psychiatry at the Centre for Pediatric Research.

Health care advocates say that doctors are routinely diagnosing children with ADHD even though there are no

clinical tests for this condition. Instead, they find it easier to write a prescription for Ritalin than discuss diet or parenting skills with the child's family.

According to Peter R. Breggin, M.D., director of the International Centre for the Study of Psychiatry and Psychology and faculty member at The Johns Hopkins University, "Ritalin does not correct biochemical imbalances — it causes them."

In his book, "Talking Back to Ritalin," he notes that there is evidence Ritalin can cause permanent damage to the child's brain and it's function. "Pediatricians, parents, and teachers are not aware of these hazards because the ill effects of this drug has been ignored and suppressed in order to encourage the sale of this drug," Dr. Breggin states.

Damaging effects of Ritalin can include:

- Decreased blood flow to the brain, an effect recently shown to be caused by cocaine where it is associated with impaired thinking ability and memory loss...
- Disruption of growth hormone, leading to suppression of growth in the body and brain of the child...
- Permanent neurological tics, including Tourette's Syndrome...
- Addiction and abuse, including withdrawal reactions

on a daily basis...

- Psychosis (mania), depression, insomnia, agitation, and social withdrawal...
- Possible shrinkage (atrophy) or other permanent physical abnormalities in the brain...
- Worsening of the very symptoms the drug is supposed to improve including hyperactivity and inattention...
- Decreased ability to learn.

"Ritalin and other stimulants are currently prescribed to millions of children in the hope of improving their supposed hyperactivity, inattention, and impulsivity," Breggin warns. He presents evidence that these drugs "work" by producing robotic or zombie-like behaviour in children. This enforced docility and obedience can produce a few weeks of subdued behaviour but has no positive effect on academic achievement and no positive long-term effects at all.

Contrary to claims by drug advocates, giving Ritalin to a child does not help to prevent future problems such as school failure or delinquency, he emphasizes.

Ritalin's lack of effectiveness has been proven by hundreds of studies but has not been revealed to doctors, teachers or parents. "Parents and teachers and even doctors have been badly misled by drug company marketing

practices," says Breggin. "Drug companies have targeted children as the new market..."

Breggin does not believe that mind-altering drugs are an appropriate approach to helping our children. Instead, he urges adults to learn to identify and meet the individual needs of the children in their care.

Most children receiving Ritalin have been identified for treatment by teachers who have been misled by Drug Company and government promotional campaigns for Ritalin and other stimulants. "Educate — don't medicate," should be the motto of every parent or teacher who is tempted to resort to Ritalin, Breggin urges.

We have been able to help many children with ADHD without reliance on Ritalin. I am holding a lecture on alternative ways of dealing with ADHD on Nov. 6, 2012.

If you need additional information, please call me personally at 605-665-8228 and visit my website: www.plathwellness.com

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Cuba

From Page 1

As the event unfolded, Sall, who was a member of the 82nd Airborne Division, went hunting as planned after hitchhiking home.

"I heard more and more things," he said. "I'm wondering what is going on. All I knew was, I wasn't there, and I wanted to be. You might think, it's better to be somewhere else, but that isn't the way I felt."

On Oct. 24, a telegram was delivered to his parents' home, where he was staying. It instructed him to return to Fort Bragg immediately.

This began a scramble that included flying from Kansas City to Memphis, Tenn., in a rickety B-25 Mitchell Bomber that was scheduled to be decommissioned. It would be Saturday, Oct. 27, before Sall got back to base.

"I walked into the base, and it was deserted," Sall recalled. "You could hear a pin drop."

His peers had been shipped off to bases in Florida in case an invasion of Cuba was required.

Sall said he was devastated. "Being absent was the worst thing I ever had happen," he stated.

To this day, Sall doesn't know exactly why he was allowed to leave as the crisis was getting under way.

Did the First Sergeant not know what was occurring, he

wondered.

"The more plausible explanation would be, as long as 300 people don't show up at the desk for leave, do business as usual," Sall said. "They didn't want to send a signal to the Soviets."

Strangely enough, Sall said he later encountered another South Dakota soldier who had been given leave during the crisis to take part in opening weekend of pheasant season. He received his telegram to return to base about 12 hours prior to Sall.

"What a coincidence," he said.

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE CRISIS

Looking back on the events of 50 years ago, Sister Ann Kessler, a retired Mount Marty College history and political science professor, said it is important to remember how close the world came to having an all-out nuclear war.

"It was averted because of negotiations and compromise (removal of the offending warheads in Turkey, e. g.), and the ability of the Kennedys to stall for time and refuse to let the Pentagon talk them into striking Cuba," she said. "Obviously, it was the right thing to do, as it could have resulted in almost total annihilation of two major countries and possibly others, as well."

"It was the philosopher, Santayana, who said that those who do not know history are destined to repeat it," Kessler added. "Every president, and every citizen, for that matter, should read

Robert Kennedy's 'Thirteen Days,' and see the movie of the same name that portrays how the Kennedys refused the military intervention the Pentagon wanted."

Robert Kennedy was the president's brother and served as the U.S. attorney general from 1961-64.

Dr. Richard Lofthus, professor of history at Mount Marty College, echoes Kessler's thoughts on President Kennedy's steadfast refusal to invade Cuba.

"I think the way in which the Cuban Missile Crisis was resolved should remind us of the wisdom of the founders who crafted a constitutional approach to government that insured civilian control over the military," he said. "I think most historians would agree that, had President Kennedy listened exclusively to his military advisors, the result would have been World War III. Instead, he took into account various options to deal with the incident, and the approach he chose did diffuse the crisis."

Unknown to the U.S. at the time, there were tens of thousands of Soviet combat troops in Cuba and 158 nuclear weapons. Had American troops invaded, a nuclear response was virtually guaranteed. That, in turn, would likely have led to the U.S. firing off its own nuclear weapons.

In recent years, it was uncovered that the Soviets did not immediately remove all their nuclear weapons from Cuba. For a time, they were contemplating a scenario of leaving 100 tactical

nuclear weapons on the island and teaching the Cubans how to use them.

Ultimately, the Soviets decided to secretly remove the remaining weapons, despite protests from Cuban leader Fidel Castro. The decision came after Anastas Mikoyan, the Soviet deputy prime minister, visited Castro and became disturbed by his erratic behavior. Mikoyan cited a fake Soviet law banning the transfer of tactical nuclear weapons to other countries while speaking with Castro and wrote back to Moscow that they should be retrieved.

With the benefit of hindsight, Lofthus said it is important to

take a broader view of the crisis within the context of the Cold War.

"American folklore tends not to mention that the United States had missiles in Turkey at that time and instead emphasizes Kennedy's heroics in solving the crisis," he stated. "A more balanced approach recognizes that each side shared some responsibility for the Cuban Missile Crisis, and for the wider Cold War itself."

At one point during the crisis, Kennedy incredulously compared the placement of nuclear weapons in Cuba by the Soviets to the U.S. putting such weapons in Turkey. An adviser reminded

the president that the U.S. had done just that.

Despite the close call, nuclear weapons have continued to proliferate around the world and the threat of a nuclear war remains.

Sall said he has never been an advocate of nuclear weapons.

"I guess you could argue they've kept the peace, but I don't like the big cloud hanging over," he stated. "In that sense, nothing has changed since the Cuban Missile Crisis."

You can follow Nathan Johnson on Twitter at twitter.com/AnInlandVoyage

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