

Koch and Glyoxylide



“In the battles over cancer, the war that raged against Dr. William Frederick Koch is an epic in ruthless ferocity. The discoverer of Glyoxylide, an oxygen catalyst that purportedly increases the capacity of the cell to burn off toxins, is usually referred to by his enemies as the “quack who fled to Brazil to escape prosecution by the Food and Drug Administration.” His product is ridiculed as nothing but distilled water.

“Doctor Koch’s background, however, is hardly that of a charlatan. Born in Detroit in 1885, his degrees are A.B. (1909), M.A. (1910), Ph.D. (1917), all from the University of Michigan; and M.D. (1918), from the Detroit College of Medicine. From 1910 to 1913, Doctor Koch taught histology and embryology at the University of Michigan, and from 1914 to 1919 he was a professor of physiology at the Detroit Medical College.

“Before he was thirty years old, Doctor Koch made a significant scientific contribution to endocrinology by his work on the parathyroid glands. These tiny glands attached to each side of the thyroid were once carelessly snipped off by surgeons when they removed goiters. Death from tetany inevitably occurred because the parathyroids regulate calcium

metabolism. The *Journal of the AMA* heralded Koch's work in 1913 with a highly laudatory editorial. Six years later, in the same pages he was to be branded as a faker.

"In his work on parathyroids, Koch discovered that removal of the glands brings a marked coagulation of blood and tissues. As cancer patients display the same characteristic, he reasoned that cancer might be due to a toxic condition related to a hormonal deficiency brought on by injury or irritation. This heightened coagulation is a protective mechanism, which also stimulates tumor growths. Koch therefore attempted to remove the toxins with tissue thrombin, a ferment which brings on a fever whose heat burns off the toxic elements in the system. This approach was similar to Coley's, but Koch apparently produced curative fevers a little more consistently with tissue thrombin and thereby secured better results.

"When Koch boldly claimed a cure for cancer based on the results of treating eight cases, he became a marked man. His claims were derided, and he quickly fell into disfavor with the reigning surgeons in the Wayne County Medical Society.

"Dr. Koch approached the cancer problem from the standpoint that the disease is caused by toxins remaining in the blood system. In line with his original interpretation of sugar oxidation as a function to destroy toxins resulting from metabolic processes, which he taught at Wayne University from 1914 to 1919, he believed this to be due to insufficient oxidation. He also believed that germs also produce toxins which are incompletely removed, thus subscribing in part to the virus theory of cancer and leading quite naturally into his belief that the solution to the cancer problem lay in securing more active catalysts to stimulate the body's capacity to oxidize toxins.

"This reasoning led to the creation of Glyoxylide. According to Koch, his preparation starts a chain reaction in which toxins are converted into antitoxins by the addition of molecules, which alter their composition. It was also Koch's belief that the cancer germ or virus is originally harmless but becomes virulent when poisoned by the toxins in the system.

"This highly ingenious reasoning, although based on authentic physiology and chemistry appears a bit too magical. A substance which through some alchemy actually converts a toxin into an antitoxin seems incredible. However, opponents of Koch's theories have

formulated no scientific arguments to refute it. Without any investigation, Koch's theories have always been peremptorily dismissed as nonsense.

“The Koch treatment does not consist entirely of Glyoxylide but also includes a rigid diet which excludes all foods which are toxic or which contain oxygen inhibitors, such as meats, beans, lentils, coffee, alcohol and tomatoes. Only distilled water is permitted, and daily enemas are prescribed. Neither Glyoxylide alone nor diet alone will cure cancer; according to the Koch school, each must be used in conjunction with the other. One injection of the catalyst is usually effective for six months, and additional injections are not given until decreased oxidation is again evident. The treatment has the advantage of not requiring hospitalization; it is said to greatly alleviate pain, obviate the use of narcotics and stimulate the appetite.

“The Koch theory of cancer is as follows: ‘Clinical observation disclose the persistence of toxemia over a period as long as twenty years previous to the advent of the growth. After the growth has come, these toxic manifestations disappear or nearly so. After a surgical removal of the growth they return and with recurrence of the growth again disappear. We designate these symptoms as the pro-growth symptoms for they differ from those consequent to the activity of the growth itself. The strongest and the sufficient proof that cancer is a response of protection against a definite toxin, however, rests with the fact that removal of the toxin and destruction of the toxic sources is followed by complete involution of all cancer tissue, complete healing of the regions involved, return to health, with absence of growth and pro-growth symptoms, and the absence of recurrence.’

“In the recovery process, according to the Koch theory, the cancer cell is digested and eliminated by being ‘split into the chemical elements from which it is constructed, namely, amino acids, fats, sugars, salts, and certain toxic substances. The food materials are turned back to the blood to re-nourish the body. The toxic substances must also be absorbed but are useless and toxic and they are eliminated through the kidneys, burned up through fever, or passed out in the perspiration, feces and mucous secretions.”

“Koch's theories strongly contradict prevailing opinion. His internal treatment of cancer, correlated with diet, would relegate surgery and irradiation to the discard. Koch went so far as to say that a surgeon who speaks of curing cancer by operation ‘not only belies the

statistics but he shows his ignorance of the minute structure of the body, together with his ignorance of pathology.”

“Koch’s outspoken criticism put surgeons in the same embarrassing position as the obstetricians, who were accused by Semmelweis of spreading puerperal fever with their contaminated hands. Surgery and biopsy, Koch said, only spread cancer faster; but unfortunately, surgeons dominated the practice of cancer, had the power to pass on the merits of cancer cures and naturally resented such forceful criticisms. That is the bizarre position into which Koch was thrust, and his subsequent career became a desperate struggle against the interests whom he opposed but who had the power to brand him as a “cancer quack.”

“The first battle of the “Koch Cancer Cure” war, and one that decided the issue forever in official medical circles, took place in Detroit in 1919. In response to popular pressure, Mayor Couzens, one of the original founders of the Ford Motor Company and later a United States senator, was responsible for initiating a test of the Koch remedy. The procedure devised is one of the fairest and most practical ever proposed in cancer investigations. Unfortunately, its provisions were ignored and nothing conclusive ever came of it. The plan called for a committee of five examining physicians, appointed by the Wayne County Medical Society, to select the patients for treatment by Doctor Koch and to observe his results. In other words these officials were to be responsible for the selection and diagnosis of patients, and Koch was to be responsible for their treatment. Certainly nothing could be fairer. There could be no charge against Koch in the matter of selecting patients; that responsibility rested squarely on the shoulders of the committee, none of who was friendly toward Doctor Koch. According to Koch, this is what happened:

“Seven advanced and hopeless cases of internal cancer were selected. They were not local patients, but picked from widely scattered communities and had been brought to Detroit for treatment in a special hospital ward. For three weeks not one member of the committee certified a patient’s condition over his signature, the necessary step before Koch could start treatment.

“The patients were sinking fast; obviously the greater the delay, the more difficult would be the cure. Aroused, Doctor Koch appealed to the president of the medical society, who

whereupon demanded angrily that the committee perform its duty. One patient — and only one — was examined. The diagnosis was hopeless, spreading, internal cancer.

“Doctor Koch claims that to avoid criticism, he immediately instituted treatment of all patients without waiting for their examinations by committee members. According to Koch’s supporters all seven patients responded exceedingly well after only three weeks of treatment. The committee then called the test off alleging that Doctor Koch refused to cooperate, and sent the patients home with a warning not to have anything further to do with Koch.

“According to the AMA version of the test, published in its *Journal* of February 12, 1921, Koch was a difficult and uncooperative personality. It was alleged that after the committee went over the cases with him, he demanded permission to name a member of the committee and that permission was granted but that he failed to name his man. It was also alleged that after this meeting Koch gave his injections to the patients but never returned to treat them further. So some patients left in disgust, and the committee sent the rest home.

“Doctor Koch claims that every effort was made to follow up the results of his treatment but that he could trace only three patients. One of them was the patient examined by a member of the committee, as had been agreed upon. Her ((Mrs. Fritts)) cancer had originated in the uterus, had spread to the stomach and had caused severe hemorrhaging, but she made a dramatic recovery, according to Koch. Her husband signed an affidavit that her recovery started within three weeks after the injection had been given and progressed to a complete cure. The patient died in an accident fifteen years later. Autopsy disclosed no existing cancer.

“A second patient was found to be in good health several years later, free of hemorrhages, pain and the cancerous growth. She testified that as soon as the treatment had been given, her pain had been relieved. The third case that Dr. Koch was able to trace had had an inoperable stomach cancer, with severe pain and hemorrhaging. In 1923, an affidavit certifying to her recovery was submitted to the Wayne County Medical Society in an effort to secure a fair hearing for the Koch treatment.

“The hearing was set for November 5, 1923. In the meantime, the chairman received a

letter dated October 29th, from the “Propaganda Department” of the AMA to this effect:

“There appears to be no reason or warrant for a further examination of the ‘Koch Cancer Cure’. In spite of the unfavorable report of the Wayne County Medical Society (publicized in its bulletin and in the AMA Journal). Koch has continued to commercialize his alleged cure. To take any further action in this case would, in our opinion, simply serve to advertise Koch and give his ‘cure’ a dignity which is not in the public interest.

“Nevertheless, the Cancer Committee of the Wayne County Medical Society did convene. Doctor Koch brought before them a number of patients whose condition had been diagnosed as hopeless by various local physicians but whom he had cured. He also presented patients still under his treatment. The committee denied both the diagnoses and the evidence of cure and, according to Koch supporters, attempted to dissuade patients from further treatment by Koch and to persuade them to undergo surgery instead. *

(* See “The Koch Cancer Treatment And Its Investigations” in the Table of Contents on this web site for medical records, affidavits, and testimonies on the W.C.M.S.’s patients.)

“Professor W.A. Dewey of the Department of Medicine at the University of Michigan had been present at the hearings. Writing later to Doctor Koch to congratulate him on the honesty of his presentation before the committee, he said of it:

“For a studied intent to falsify, a premeditated determination to condemn everything, and an unscientific, un-American assumption to be judge, jury, and prosecuting witness, the report of this so-called committee outstrips in bias, unfairness, and mendacity anything that has ever been my lot to observe in a medical practice of forty-four years. The composition of the committee, being for the most part surgeons and radium or X-ray ‘experts,’ a class that assumes cancer to be curable only by these methods, was unfortunate in the first place, and in the second place, no member of the committee was, in my opinion, qualified to sit in judgment on your treatment, by education, experience, or by right.

“Another of Doctor Koch’s friends was Dr. A. R. Mitchell, for many years chairman of the Board of Trustees of the American Medical Association. He wrote Dr. Koch several

commendatory letters and advised him, on the strength of his intimate knowledge of the tactics of his confreres, to withhold publication of further information on his cancer preparations or methods. A young Detroit girl is alleged to have plied her charms in an unsuccessful attempt to get these letters away from Koch. Allegations were also made that certain interests closely identified with official medicine tried to gain control of the Koch formula; unable to grab it, they resorted to a campaign of vilification and persecution.

“This oppression was extended to those who dared to employ Glyoxylide. It became dangerous for physicians to endorse the Koch method, for they were immediately threatened with loss of their academic and professional standing in the medical profession. These threats were allegedly employed successfully against Dr. Carroll W. Allen, professor of surgery at Tulane University, and against Professor Bryan, head of surgery at Vanderbilt University. Both reported good results but were coerced into discontinuing the use of the Koch preparations.

“In 1940 and 1941 Doctor Koch conducted work in Mexico and Brazil on leprosy, tuberculosis and mental conditions. He claims to have brought about a rapid cure of dementia with one injection of Glyoxylide. This reputedly so incensed a representative of a big pharmaceutical firm then reaping huge profits from useless drugs injected repeatedly into mental patients. He is reputed to have shaken his fist in Doctor Koch’s face and warned him that he would not be interfering much longer in Brazil. *

* (The hospitals were told that they would not receive their pharmaceuticals on a “timely basis”, if they continued to grant Dr. Koch privileges.)

(He returned to the U.S. at the request of the Federal Government under the auspices that they wished to have an honest discussion on his labels. The meeting was a rouse and shortly thereafter he flew to Florida from Washington, D.C.)

“In April 1942, Doctor Koch was arrested in Florida on a charge that his product was falsely labeled. At the hearing, \$10,000 bail was asked. The Federal Commissioner demanded an explanation for this unusual request; such bail is customary only in murder cases. The district attorney then disclosed that he had been ordered from Detroit to insist on the high bail to prevent Doctor Koch from returning to Brazil and finishing his research there.

“In 1942 and 1946, the United States Food and Drug Administration prosecuted Koch in two bitterly fought trials. The government attacked the oxidation theory of curing cancer and contended that, according to the opinion of their experts, the remedies were indistinguishable from distilled water. A temporary injunction against the Koch Laboratory was granted pending a thorough Federal Trade Commission hearing. The injunction was made permanent in 1950.” *

* (In the *Herald of Health* issue of Feb. 1959, Mr. Matchan provides a brief synopsis of the F.T.C. Hearings from the viewpoint of an impartial reporter. *The Incredible F.T.C.*, by Dr. D. Arnott, provides a brief review of the F.T.C. Hearings from the viewpoint of a doctor whose patients were included in the evidence presented before the F.T.C. See the Table of Contents on this website, for these reports.)

“Utterly exhausted, Doctor Koch relinquished his methods to the Christian Medical Research League of Detroit.

(Dr. Koch’s intentions were to remove himself from the Treatments, as an attempt to nullify any personal vendetta that might have continued the opposition to his Treatments. By placing them under the umbrella of a religious organization, he demonstrated his desire to make the Treatments readily available to any and everyone. Unfortunately, “Organized Medicine” continued to view the Treatments as an economic threat, and was not dissuaded from continuing their legal assaults.)

“The powerful punitive measures that can be brought against physicians using an outlawed remedy, regardless of whether the proscription is justified or not, is a deterrent against independence of thought. It has proven effective in finally destroying Glyoxylyde and putting it off the market.

“The career of William Koch who now lives in Brazil is indeed a tragedy. If his theories are scientifically unsound, they can be scientifically demolished. If his clinical claims were false, a fair test would disprove them. Instead, Dr. Koch and his associates were driven out of practice by the concerted and relentless prosecution of medical societies and government agencies.” (Dr. Koch returned to Brazil, as a personal choice, to continue his research. He continued his work and made great strides in advancing the capabilities of his Treatments. However, his work continued to be restrained by the powerful pharmaceutical companies who held the hospitals at their mercy.)

Bibliography:

Cancer News Journal, 1977.

(Editor's Note: The following article, which serves to describe the life and great work of the genius, William Frederick Koch, whose portrait appears on the front cover of this issue, is lifted, in the main, from the timely and important book, The Cancer Blackout, by Nat Morris. This is undoubtedly the finest and most comprehensive book in print on the various suppressed, non-toxic cancer therapies.)

(Additional notes have been added to further clarify points made with in the text. Emphasis has been added in some areas of the text.)