

FLUORIDE AND SERUM CHOLINESTERASE

The latest issue *Fluoride* (Vol. 41, No. 2) was fascinating to me, especially in view of the discussion on page 123 in the translation of the report by Yongxiang Chen et al. on how fluoride might affect IQ.¹ May I be permitted to point out that Dr Mien Bulthuis, the neurologist in our physicians' group studying side effects of water fluoridation in The Netherlands during the early 1970s, had done extensive research for her doctoral dissertation titled "The Syndrome of Atypical Serum Cholinesterase."² In her studies, she had found that 1 mg F/L in blood serum gave a significant *in vitro* inhibition of serum cholinesterase activity.

When Dr R Drion, the Secretary of State for Public Health, heard about the forthcoming publication of Dr Bulthuis's work, he called her into his office and asked her to withhold reporting her findings because he considered them "politically sensitive" while the Dutch government was busily engaged in attempting to fluoridate the entire nation. Being a person of integrity, Dr Bulthuis indignantly refused his request and went ahead and published her research.

After we had won the battle to end fluoridation in Holland,³ our physicians' group conducted an *in vivo* serum cholinesterase experiment in 1976 under the supervision of Dr Bulthuis. With one of us as a control, the others swallowed 1-ppm F water—which we had to prepare ourselves, since fluoridation had been prohibited. We found that the serum cholinesterase activity in the control showed a smooth undulating curve, whereas that in the physicians who drank the fluoridated water showed a wildly erratic behavior. It is a pity Dr Bulthuis never published these interesting results, but in view of evidence cited by Chen et al.¹ they clearly deserve further investigation.

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REFERENCES

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- 2 Bulthuis M. The syndrome of atypical serum cholinesterase [dissertation]. Groningen: University of Groningen;1972.
- 3 Fluoridation stopped in The Netherlands in Enschede on September 23, 1976. Moolenburgh H. *Fluoride: the freedom fight*. Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing; 1987. p. 193-201.