

Relief for Ramsay Hunt syndrome

DR. GOTT



PETER GOTT, M.D.

DEAR DR. GOTT: My brother has had Ramsay Hunt syndrome for five years. It's a virus of the nerve endings and is in the same family as shingles. The doctors say there's no help for the pain. Is this correct?

DEAR READER: Ramsay Hunt syndrome (herpes zoster oticus) is an unusual form of shingles that affects the auditory nerve and causes deafness, vertigo, ear pain and paralysis of the facial nerve. It is associated with blisters in and around the ear.

Like other manifestations of shingles, the affliction is due to nerve infection from the zoster/varicella virus. In order for treatment to be effective, it must be started as early as possible. Acyclovir, an anti-viral agent, is often effective in reducing the severity of inflammation. Cortisone drugs may help alleviate the most distressing complication of shingles: the post-herpetic neuralgia and chronic shocklike pains that follow this infection.

Evidently, your brother has developed this complication. Although antiviral drugs and cortisone will not be effective at this stage of the disease, he may be aided by various methods of pain control, including acupuncture, biofeedback, hypnosis and anti-depressant medication.

If his doctor is unable to relieve the pain, I suggest that your brother seek a referral to a pain-control clinic. Such resources are available in many teaching hospitals and are designed to help people cope with chronic, intractable pain.

For more information, I am sending you a copy of my Health Report "Managing Chronic Pain." Other readers who would like a copy should send \$1.25 with their name and address to P.O. Box 91369, Cleveland, OH 44101-3369. Be sure to mention the title.

DEAR DR. GOTT: My husband was in great health until he developed aplastic anemia, and four months later he was dead. What can you tell me about this disease?

DEAR READER: Aplastic anemia is a serious condition marked by failure of the bone marrow to produce new red blood cells. About half the cases are idiopathic (of unknown cause). The remaining cases are due to bone marrow damage from radiation, chemicals (such as arsenic and benzene), toxins (organic phosphates), leukemia, tumors of the thymus gland, or medications (particularly, anti-convulsants, anti-inflammatory drugs and certain antibiotics).

Some causes of aplastic anemia are correctable using drugs such as cortisone. Most forms are resistant to treatment and require bone-marrow transplants, in which bone-marrow tissue from a compatible donor is transfused into the patient and forms the basis for new bone-marrow cells to grow.

Patients with aplastic anemia are usually extremely susceptible to life-threatening infections. Hemorrhage may occur. Individuals with severe anemia will die without oxygen-carrying red blood cells to supply nutrients to tissues.

DEAR DR. GOTT: My mom and dad won't tell me if my problem is fatal. I'm 12 and every morning on the bus, I get a bad headache, a fever of 102 and I can't remember what my friends are talking about. Is this weird?

DEAR READER: I doubt that your problem is fatal, but you certainly need professional attention to discover the cause of your fever.

From your brief description, I'd say that the fever is making you delirious. Once the cause of the fever is identified, you can receive treatment and return to normal. Ask your parents to make an appointment for you to see your pediatrician.

DEAR DR. GOTT: I'm in a dilemma. I have hemochromatosis, which requires regular phlebotomies. My health insurance does not pay for this procedure. On the other hand, various blood centers will not knowingly accept blood from a carrier, but don't test. If I continue to donate blood, will I make someone sick?

DEAR READER: Hemochromatosis is a rare disease marked by excessive build-up of iron in the body. It causes liver enlargement, skin discoloration, diabetes and heart failure. The most effective treatment is phlebotomy, the periodic removal of blood (and iron) from the system.

Hemochromatosis is a hereditary disorder due to an abnormal gene. It is not transmissible or catchable in the way an infection is. Therefore, the blood you donate is probably not going to harm a recipient. However, you should check with your local blood bank authorities.

MY GENERATION

"Fashions For The Young At Heart"

115 MAIN ST. S., GEORGETOWN
Across From Knox Church 873-2851

Don't be effusive

by Jeffrey McQuain

Someone who gushes or expresses too much emotion is effusive. Allow me to recommend this adjective without becoming effusive about it.

Trespass intrudes on another's property without right or invitation. End it with pass, which trespass doesn't permit one to do.

Awning extends a rooflike cover in front of a door or window. For a spelling tip, stop yawning — awning is the end of yawning.

Dual describes two parts or elements. Be careful how you spell dual, though, or you may end up in a duel.

Q. How do you pronounce despicable? Shouldn't you emphasize the first syllable?

A. Several dictionaries list first the pronunciation that stresses the first syllable of despicable, but they also accept a stressing of the second syllable. I find that more people now stress the second syllable, but that doesn't make the other pronunciation despicable.

Q. When magicians do tricks, they often say the word presto. Does that mean anything?

A. Presto comes from the Italian for "quick" or "quickly." The Latin root, is the adverb praesto, which means "at hand." When that rabbit in the hat suddenly appears at hand, there's no better word than the magical presto.

For more information, I am sending you a copy of my Health Report "Insuring Your Good Health." Other readers who would like a copy should send \$1.25 with their name and address to P.O. Box 91369, Cleveland, OH 44101-3369. Be sure to mention the title.

DEAR DR. GOTT: My severe eczema cleared up after a small tumor was removed from my thyroid gland, which was taken out also. Is this a typical reaction?

DEAR READER: No, this is not typical.

Eczema is not caused by thyroid tumors. However, growths of one kind or another can be associated with skin changes and rashes. Perhaps your original skin problem was not eczema but a manifestation of the thyroid tumor.

DEAR DR. GOTT: I have benign familial tremor and have had it all my life. Until two years ago I could control it by concentration. That no longer works. Corgard helps somewhat. Is there another medication which might be more effective?

DEAR READER: Benign familial (essential) tremor is a common and harmless inconvenience that is inherited. It is marked by a shaking of the hands, head and voice that is worse during the performance of skilled acts and may be intensified by fatigue, stress and age. Sometimes caffeine, nicotine and other stimulants make the tremor more noticeable.

Three current treatments are useful in blocking the tremor: low doses of tranquilizers, primidone (Mysoline) and beta-blockers (of which Corgard is one). Ask your doctor to adjust the dose of Corgard or consider changing to another type of drug.

ASK KATHY

Dear Kathy...

As I near my ideal weight, my weight loss has slowed, but I have noticed that clothes seem to fit looser. Is that possible or is it my imagination?

Reply:

Even though weight loss may slow, you will often continue to lose inches. This reduction in inches accounts for your clothing fitting looser. Knowing that you're continuing to lose inches, even when weight loss has slowed or stopped, will keep you motivated until actual weight loss resumes. Being able to see a reduction in inches can be especially helpful during plateaus.

At Diet Center, we encourage you to monitor your inches-lost on a regular basis. Remember, even though the scale may not show you what you want to see every time, the mirror and the tape measure are the true measures of your success.



KATHY HAJAS
Diet Center Counselor

M&M meat shops
OPEN 7 DAYS
873-2151
Sun 11am-5pm Thurs-Fri 9am-9pm
Mon-Wed 9am-6pm Saturday 9am-6pm

DIET CENTER
Business Number 877-2900
Home Number 853-0780
98 Mill St., Georgetown
Personal Consultation By Appointment
VISA

\$ BULK FOODS \$

Next to Mac's Milk

Specials For This Week!

BEER NUTS
\$1.99
LB.

BROWN SUGAR
49¢
LB.

BAKING SODA
49¢
LB.

Buy Any Other Item - \$2.00 or More and Receive the Prices Above

SPECIAL PRICES IN EFFECT UNTIL TUESDAY, APRIL 11, 1989

SENIORS' DAY EVERY WEDNESDAY 10% OFF (Excluding Specials)

10 Mountainview Rd. South 877 5570

BULK FOODS Next To MAC'S MILK

For all your Baking Needs: Candies, Snacks, Nuts, Dried Fruits, Spices, Soups, Muffin Mixes, Gourmet Coffee, Flavoured Teas, Etc.

GIFTS AND CRAFT SUPPLIES

APRIL RONDALI'S APRIL

TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
4	SATIN PHOTO ALBUM CLASS 7:00 p.m.	6	7	CHILDREN'S CRAFTS
	10% OFF LACE/SATIN	10% OFF FLORALS		10% OFF MINIATURES
11	12	13	14	15
10% OFF Large Selection of RIBBON	PICTURE FRAME CLASS 7:00 p.m.			
	15% OFF PRINTED FABRIC			
18	19	20	21	CHILDREN'S CRAFTS
	FABRIC WREATH WITH HEARTS	15% OFF LARGE SELECTION OF DELTA PAINTS & VARNISH!!!		*FREE 2m of GYMP (Class Adults)
25	26	27	28	29
15% OFF Entire Selection of "BOOKS"	TOILET TISSUE HOLDER	15% OFF LARGE SELECTION OF ROBERT SIMMONS BRUSHES!!		10% OFF BROADCLOTH
	10% OFF LACE			

*WATCH FOR NEXT MONTH'S CLASSES AND SPECIALS
4 WEEK TOILET PAINTING CLASS FOR BEGINNERS
3 WEEK MACRAME & LAWN CHAIRS

RONDALI'S GIFTS & CRAFT SUPPLIES
340 Queen St. ACTON 853-4781
Proprietor LISA BESSEY