

'Gold shots' can relieve rheumatoid arthritis

Editor's note: The writer is a specialist in rheumatology in northwest Detroit and graduated with honors from the University of Michigan Medical School.

By RAYMOND J. WEITZMAN

Q. I suffer from occasional attacks of severe arthritis pain. When they strike, I'm willing to do almost anything to fight back. I recently heard about a treatment called "gold shots." Please tell me what they are and if they can help me.

Mrs. D.M.

A. The best way to respond to the points you've raised is in their reverse order.

First, to determine whether the administration of gold compounds — technically called "chrysotherapy" — is the right treatment for you, consult your personal physician or a specialist to whom he refers you.

Gold shots have been used since 1928 to treat

rheumatoid arthritis. However, they aren't a recommended course of action for every patient with the disease.

Chrysotherapy is a complicated treatment which usually is reserved for patients with severe or aggressive disease in crippling form. Most people with rheumatoid arthritis do not develop destructive joint disease, thus are not candidates for chrysotherapy.

Then, too, the treatment has a significant incidence of side effects. Most frequently, these include an itchy skin rash, sores in the mouth and an unpleasant metallic taste. Less commonly, blood or kidney reactions may occur which force discontinuation. Thus, blood and urine tests are required at frequent intervals during the course of treatment.

THE GOOD NEWS is that chrysotherapy can modify the crippling effects of severe forms of

rheumatoid arthritis and can prevent joint destruction. Recently, it has been found beneficial in some cases of psoriatic arthritis (arthritis which is related to psoriasis).

If you mean "How do they work?" when you ask what gold shots are, the answer won't satisfy your curiosity. It doesn't satisfy mine, either, because no one knows exactly how gold acts against the disease.

We do follow a specific course of treatment, though, which has proven effective.

A gold preparation is injected intramuscularly weekly for approximately six months. If a good response is achieved, the shots gradually are administered less often until they're down to one per month.

Most patients — about three out of every four, in fact — respond to chrysotherapy. Often a complete remission, during which no evidence of arthritis can be found, is achieved.

However, if treatments are discontinued, arthritis will return. So chrysotherapy usually is continued for extended periods of time, sometimes for many years.

Of special interest to patients with severe forms of arthritis is the fact that most adverse reactions to gold shots are rapidly reversible simply by halting the treatments. Some cases of life-threatening complications have been reported, however.

IN SUMMARY, chrysotherapy represents an intense form of treatment with the potential to prevent crippling in patients with severe rheumatoid arthritis and, in some cases, patients with psoriatic arthritis.

Now you know its general application, how it is administered and some of its possible side effects.

Only a physician working with you as an individual can determine if gold shots are the right course of atreatment in your case.

The poor are people, not problems to be solved

This is not the first time I have written about world hunger. Nor will it be my last.

Hunger is so widespread that it will be around for a long time to come. But certain features this season make it necessary for us to reconsider our response to world hunger.

The widespread practice of charity was expanded during the Christmas season, and many people contributed money and services in an outpouring of love and good will to the "less fortunate" and "the poor and needy."

One danger is that we might confuse our practice of charity with justice and seriously jeopardize the ultimate resolution of world hunger.

The other danger is that we might extract the feature of love from our efforts at justice and miss the joy we can experience in accepting people as they are.

CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS of all types sponsor fund-raising projects to raise money for food and toys.

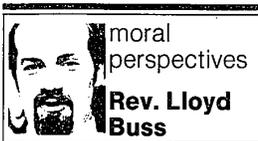
Unfortunately, this outpouring of love can easily obscure the path of justice that we must follow in resolving world hunger.

There are many definitions of poverty, but it is reasonable to assume that there is a direct relationship between poverty and hunger. Hunger is an expression of poverty, and poverty is a consequence of social injustice.

When Ford Motor Co. in the U.S. discovered that Ford workers in Spain were receiving half the wages paid Ford workers in the U.S., it illustrated an inequality that has been nurtured by social injustice.

When the American people were told that only one of every 10 people working in the auto plants in Spain could afford to buy the product they made, it further illustrated how we have maintained an artificial position of strength and achievement.

Ford cars made in Spain are sold in the world market, and the profits realized from their sale



must be considered as resources expropriated from Spanish workers.

The same injustice exists in the sugar fields of the Philippines, the cane fields in the Dominican Republic, the cattle ranches in South America.

MILLIONS have little money to buy food. And they have so little money because they have been systematically exploited by others.

World hunger cannot be explained as a consequence of scarcity. Even though capitalism and socialism would both want us to believe that there is not enough to go around, the starting point for our understanding of hunger must not be scarcity but human injustice.

This makes world hunger a "solvable issue." The wrongs committed in years and days past can be redressed, family income can be improved the world over. Laws and legislation can be created to prevent exploitation, and equitable alliances between technology and human resources can be made.

Many who recently were earnestly involved in raising money for Christmas food baskets are also the decision-makers of industry and government. One could hope for more use of their expertise in the ultimate solution of world hunger.

THE TROUBLE with all that is that this does not do this out of any love for the poor and hungry. We do it so they will "get better."

Whatever our efforts might be, they are not directed toward their needs but toward our expectations of what they might be. Instead of accepting them as people, we have turned them into "cases" — the "underprivileged," the "disadvantaged" or the "culturally deprived."

And just as soon as we can amend their ways and improve their habits, then they will be able to take their place alongside us. They will become like us, and we will be pleased with our efforts.

We have turned the poor into failures and nobodies. Victims of powers beyond their control, they

are the constant reminders of what happens to people who are weak. We insist that they get well, that they stay productive and exercise proper human responsibility.

FROM BEGINNING to end, the Bible has always maintained that the poor are loved and cared for because they are blessed by God. The directives toward responsibility and integrity in work and practice are directed to those who have instead of those who have not.

The condemnations and judgments are directed to those who have instead of those who have not. "The poor are blessed and the gifts of God are freely given to them because that is the way God is."

It is not easy to love those we have regarded as failures or nobodies. So the sharing of food and gifts at Christmas time may be one of the fastest ways we have to meet another human being instead of helping the "poor and needy."

I don't have a good name for the practice of sharing food baskets, but if we stop thinking of them as problems to be solved and see them as brothers and sisters with whom we share the gift of life and providential love, the joy of love might accelerate our redress of injustice.

Ring out the old. Ring in the new.
 apple computer
COMPUTER CONNECTION
 38437 Grand River • Farmington Hills
 477-4470
 Mon., Thurs., Fri. 10-8, Tues., Wed., Sat. 10-6
 Ask about our leasing plan.
LAST CHANCE TO REGISTER FOR WINTER CLASSES

SHAPE UP IN STYLE

THE RIGHT CLUB FOR THE RIGHT REASONS...

...NAUTILUS
 The finest in modern exercise equipment has arrived. Nautilus is here at Hamilton Place.

...SWIM INDOORS
 Take a dip in our spacious indoor pool. Classes and instructions available.

...AEROBIC
 Join one of our free Aerobic Dance classes. A great way to shape up.

...EAT WELL
 Dine in our gourmet restaurant or have lunch at Sneakers. Now under the direction of Hamilton Place and Golden Mushroom Chef Milos.

...RACQUETBALL
 Enjoy your complimentary membership at the Oakland Racquet Club and play racquetball.

...RELAX
 The ultimate in relaxation: Sauna, whirlpool, shower, and more...Hamilton Place has it all.

JOIN NOW

\$ UP TO 200 OFF

FROM LAST YEAR'S RATES

HP HAMILTON PLACE
 30333 Southfield Rd.
 (Between 12 and 13 Mile Rds.)
 Call 646-8990 Between 9:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m.

CUSTOM DRAPERIES
 Made to Measure
 Up to 100%
Fabric, Labor & Lining
 Select from hundreds of colors & fabrics, satins, sheers and casements.
 Bring in your measurements for free estimate

FARMINGTON TOWNE CENTER **ORCHARD & 14 MILE CENTER**

37041 GRAND RIVER FARMINGTON
 Hours Daily 9:30-6:00
 M., Th. 9:30-5:30
 478-3133

30886 ORCHARD LAKE RD. FARMINGTON HILLS
 Hours Daily 9:30-6:00
 Thursday 9:30-8:00
 626-4313

drapery boutique
 Since 1969

College Board Workshop

S.A.T.

SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST
 SATURDAYS, JANUARY 10 & 17, 1981
 at
DETROIT COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL
 22305 West 13 Mile
 Birmingham, Mich. 48010
 from 9:00 AM 'til 12:00 Noon

AREAS TO BE COVERED:

- Test Mechanics
- Test Strategies
- Analogy Instruction
- Sentence Completion
- Reading Comprehension
- Techniques
- Review of All Mathematical Concepts

*Work Previous S.A.T. Tests

Cost: \$33.00
 Make checks payable to
Detroit Country Day School

Call 646-7717
 Jerry Hansen,
 Director
 Assistant Headmaster

OUR LAMP SALE'S ON!

GET UP TO 30% OFF!

Turn on your home with one or more of these beautiful Koch & Lowy floor lamps now, during Gorman's Great Mid-Winter Sale. You can choose from 3 different styles each with its own individual mark of distinction. All come with telescopic stem; one model comes with a 3-way switch in brass, another with a dimmer switch in brass and in chrome. And they're all priced to sell! So come and see these beautiful lamps now...at Gorman's, where the Great Mid-Winter Sale ends March 1:

GORMAN'S

29145 Telegraph Rd. Southfield, Michigan Phone: 353-9880
 1455 W. Big Beaver, Troy, Michigan Phone: 649-2070
 260 Town Center Drive, Dearborn (Across from Edgemoor Mall) Phone: 336-0340