

that it does not specifically antagonize schizophrenic pathology. In the presence of psychotic anxiety or delusions, such cognitive or emotional restriction may be desirable and therapeutic. However, the restrictive effect may be a general one, and is certainly useful in mania as well as in schizophrenia (Shopsin *et al*, 1975). The similarity of the above-described state to that of some cases of agitated depression and post-psychotic depression suggests involvement of dopamine in these affective states (Post *et al*, 1976; Gerner *et al*, 1976), as well as in schizophrenia (Snyder *et al*, 1974).

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LITHIUM AND PSORIASIS

DEAR SIR,

We have recently reported (Skott *et al*, 1977) three patients with bipolar affective disorder who have psoriasis vulgaris and who showed a marked deterioration of their skin disease during lithium treatment. Within the first two months on lithium carbonate or sustained-release lithium sulphate their psoriasis increased heavily and did not respond to conventional means of topical treatment which had earlier been effective. In all cases it was judged inadvisable to

discontinue lithium treatment. Carter (1972) reported exacerbation of psoriasis in three patients on lithium. In his patients lithium treatment was discontinued, which led to prompt improvement of the skin disorder. Voorhees *et al* (1975a) reported three patients, and Bakker and Peppinkhuizen (1975) reported four patients with psoriasis who showed deterioration on lithium.

A possible explanation for the observed effect could be through reduction of cyclic AMP, which is considered to be a stimulus to epidermal proliferation, important in psoriasis. Preliminary data from *in vitro* studies suggest that lithium affects the epidermal cyclic AMP (Voorhees *et al*, 1975b).

Since the completion of our report three similar cases have been referred to us. In one of these cases it was possible to discontinue lithium whereupon the skin disease improved to its previous appearance.

The question whether lithium may actually aggravate psoriasis has practical importance. Further studies are now in progress to confirm this clinical observation.

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