BIOTIN-FOLIC ACID INTERRELATIONSHIP — A RE-EVALUATION

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An interrelationship between biotin and folic acid in the nutrition of *Corynebacterium barkeri*, nov. spec., was recently described.[1] Subsequent investigations carried out on the nutrition of a few unidentified species of *Brevibacterium*, *Arthrobacter* and *Corynebacterium* also pointed to the possible interrelationship between the two vitamins. It was difficult to believe that such an interesting and widespread interrelationship should have remained unnoticed so far and to ascertain therefore the purity or otherwise of the folic acid sample employed (Hoffmann-La Roche) a fresh series of experiments were carried out with strain 7 of *C. barkeri* and as many as four other samples of folic acid derived from different sources and manufactured in three different countries. It was indeed a revelation to notice that the five folic acid samples fell into two categories, two of which repeatedly gave identical results reported earlier and the rest (3) behaving differently in the sense that they did not meet the partial requirements of the organism to biotin. Does this mean that the folic acid obtaining commercially are, microbiologically speaking, different or that the two samples giving partial biotin response though procured from two different laboratories got contaminated with biotin or some substance replacing biotin? In the meantime, the authors are sending their sample of folic acid to Switzerland for its re-evaluation and would seek the cooperation of scientific workers in not accepting as final the conclusions drawn with regard to the interrelationship described earlier for *C. barkeri* with respect to the biotin-folic acid. This does not, however, invalidate the rest of the results presented in that paper.[1] The authors wish to thank Drs. A. Sreenivasan, H. R. Cama and D. V. Rege for the generous supply of folic acid samples.

Reference

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