TAURINE for LIVER and GALLBLADDER

One of our WA polio members who had tried the liver cleanse diet by Dr Sandra Cabot (NSW), early in 1998, informed us that she had been able to halve the amount of carnitine she needed for fatigue.

On looking through the book that she lent me, (and realising many of our members would never stick at an 8 week major diet change program) I decided that Taurine was probably the most important element and something we could easily trial. So I bought some, tested it, and became the first guinea-pig.

Within a few days I noticed an improvement in general well being and clarity of thought. In fact it was around the time of writing the last newsletter and I found myself working on it well into the night without feeling mentally tired. Other bonuses have been a reduction in carnitine I need from 10 capsules to 6; more than halving the amount of Vitamin A I need for sharpness of vision and almost halving my Vitamin C requirements. Another recent bonus has been that warts on my hands have finally disappeared after 10 years! Most people seem to need 500 mg (half of a 1 ml scoop). If you have had hepatitis or problems with liver or gallbladder you will need 1000mg (flat 1ml scoop). We are finding people need to keep taking for a 12 month period at least.

And how have some of the others on our trial fared? Some have not noticed much difference.
Others have reported an increase in stamina and endurance, better concentration, more clear headed and in control, not as hungry and bowels working better, reduction in oedema (swelling) and not depressed now. Some have been able to reduce their carnitine dose, others have not.

So what is taurine? - I found this on the Internet, by the American Society for Nutritional Sciences 1997.

"Taurine is the most abundant free amino acid in the brain, heart and nervous system. It plays a role in the normal functioning of the brain, heart, gall bladder, eyes and vascular system. It facilitates the passage of sodium, potassium and possibly calcium and magnesium ions into and out of cells and electrically stabilises cell membranes. It modulates the activity of cAMP, which activates important enzymes in heavy muscle and contributes to muscle's contractibility Taurine is an important component of bile acids which aid in the absorption of fat soluble vitamins. It aids the body's chemistry by detoxifying harmful chemicals. Dietary taurine stimulates the formation of Taurocholate, a substance which increases cholesterol secretion in bile and improves fat metabolism in the liver.

"Taurine offers a wide range of nutritional support to many organ systems throughout the body."

And information from Thorsons "Guide to Amino Acids" by Leon Chaitow published UK 1991.

Taurine is manufactured in the body and found in our diet in animal protein but not plant protein. It is made in the liver with the help of Vitamin B6.

Taurine helps to reduce cholesterol as it utilises cholesterol in the formation of bile, so is described as a cholesterol detergent (ie cholesterol is an important part of bile but taurine is needed to allow it to become part of bile.) Bile is made in the liver and stored in the gall bladder, and released from there into the digestive tract to digest fat and protein in our meals. If this doesn't happen properly we end up with fat clogged livers that can't work efficiently. The liver is an important factory for making many enzymes, including carnitine and taurine and storing glucose. As well, the liver detoxifies - getting rid of waste and dangerous products like poisonous heavy metals (as in lead from car fumes etc.) Taurine seems to clean out the liver, enabling it to work more efficiently and protects against gall bladder disease.

Taurine, (as well as other amino acids) stimulates production of growth hormone (low in post polio). Taurine has a beneficial insulin-like effect on blood glucose levels. Taurine is needed for the retina in the eye, so improves eyesight, sparing vitamin A. Taurine also has a role in neurotransmission.

A Japanese double-blind trial on 62 heart patients showed that after 4 weeks those receiving taurine showed better breathing, fewer palpations, less oedema, and improved lab and x-ray evidence of heart status. Research has shown that heart disease, skeletal damage, physical or emotional stress and some blood diseases, result in greater urinary excretion of taurine, thus a higher intake of taurine is needed in these circumstances.

It has been added to baby formulae since the mid-1980's to make taurine levels equal to breast milk.

Taurine content in food	
beef & pork	307µmol/100g
processed meat	251µmol/100g
poultry	89µmol/100g
seafood	84µmol/100g
cow's milk	18µmol/100g
cheese	not detected

(ref: Modern Nutrition in Health & Disease 1999)