Low Dose Naltrexone

Novel uses for a licenced medication

Dr. Phil Boyle, New Orleans, August 2013

Faculty Disclosure

Doctor Phil Boyle, MD

Dr. Boyle has listed no financial interest/arrangement that would be considered a conflict of interest.



Publications

- PubMed search "Low Dose Naltrexone" 73 results
 - Pain Relief
 - Opioid, Alcohol and smoking cessation
 - Fibromyalgia
 - Crohn's Adults and children
 - Systemic Sclerosis
 - Cancer Treatment
 - Multiple sclerosis

- Growing number of novel uses for this <u>licenced drug</u>
- Nothing published on "Low dose Naltrexone" for Infertility, Miscarriage,
 PMS or Pregnancy
- But......High dose naltrexone....There is

http://www.medicines.ie/medicine/1664/SPC/Nalorex/

This is a licenced drug

- 50mg 150mg per dose
- First synthesised in 1960s
- Licenced USA 1985 Ireland 1991
- Adjunctive treatment of opioid dependence...and now alcohol dependence (unlicenced)
- Competitive inhibition of opioid receptors in <u>both</u> the <u>central and peripheral</u> nervous system

Special warnings and precautions for use

- Adverse reaction with opioids severe ensure no opioid use
- Confirm normal kidney and liver function
- Some elderly patients on 300mg naltrexone develop abnormal liver function tests
- No evidence of toxicity in volunteers receiving 800 mg/day for seven days
- Prolonged use at 50mg is acceptable.....duration of treatment is not limited

Quantity matters.....

One glass of wine



Quantity matters.....

One glass of wine



One glass of wine



Clinical experience using low dose naltrexone 4.5mg since 2004

- Have not seen abnormal liver function
- It is not necessary to monitor liver function with low dose naltrexone
- BUT never mix it with opioids vomiting for hours severe!

Animal studies do not suggest a teratogenic effect, but there is no experience of use during human pregnancy. The drug should only be used in pregnancy or lactation if considered essential by the physician.

Naltrexone has few, if any, intrinsic actions besides its opioid blocking properties.

Absorbtion – peak levels after 1 hour

Half Life of 4 hours

The duration of action of a drug is known as its half life. This is the period of time required for the concentration or amount of drug in the body to be reduced by one-half.

Naltrexone, Infertility

PubMed search – <u>10 publications</u>

We will look at 4 interesting papers......

Steroids 2012

Medical management of metabolic dysfunction in PCOS.

"Naltrexone reduces appetite and modulates insulin release; its use in PCOS may reduce hyperinsulinemia."

Duleba AJ. Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility, Univ. of California

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22182833

Journal of Endocrinological Investigation

• Naltrexone effect on pulsatile GnRH therapy for ovulation induction in polycystic ovary syndrome: a pilot prospective study.

Fulghesu AM et al Sacred Heart University, Rome, Italy - 2001

Naltrexone 50mg with pulsatile GnRH co-treatment is able to improve the ovarian responsiveness to ovulation induction in **obese PCOS patients** when compared to pulsatile GnRH alone.

This action seems to be related to a decrease of insulin secretion.

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11508781

Human Reproduction 1997

Successful induction of ovulation in normogonadotrophic clomiphene resistant anovulatory women by combined naltrexone and clomiphene citrate treatment.

Roozenburg BJ, van Dessel HJ, Evers JL, Bots RS.

- 22 patients with clomiphene resistant normogonadotrophic anovulation treated with naltrexone alone or in combination with clomid.
- 19 patients ovulation and resumption of a regular menstrual cycle
- 12 out of 19 a singleton pregnancy was observed.....2 of these miscarried

http://humrep.oxfordjournals.org/content/12/8/1720.full.pdf+html

Human Reproduction 1997

- All women resistant to clomiphene 150mg daily x 5 days for 2 cycles
- Treated with naltrexone 25 mg twice daily
- Goal complete opioid blockade to treat hypothalamic inhibition of GNRH from excessively high endorphins
- 18 required clomiphene 100mg daily for 5 days
- Continued treatment for 6 cycles

Human Reproduction 1993

Treatment with naltrexone in hypothalamic ovarian failure: induction of ovulation and pregnancy.

Wildt L, Leyendecker G, Sir-Petermann T, Waibel-Treber S.

University of Erlangen, Germany

66 women

- various grades of hypothalamic ovarian failure
- Normalisation of cycle in 49 women 18 pregnancies

High Dose Naltrexone

- This appears to be a different mechanism of action compared to LOW DOSE NALTREXONE......worth considering for excessive opioid production (Endorphins, Enkephalins.....)
 - Clomiphene resistant
 - PCOD
 - Obese and very thin extremes of weight
 - Highly stressed

Naltrexone, Infertility

Possible Mechanisms of action of High Dose Naltrexone

- Reduces insulin resistance
- Improves GNRH pulse frequency
 - Possibly by altering opioids where there is "an inappropriate increase in opioid tone"

Naltrexone, Pregnancy

PubMed search – 138 Publications

For doses up to 150mg Naltrexone has been proven safe for most adults <u>except</u> <u>pregnant or nursing women</u>....and probably those with acute hepatitis;

Naltrexone, PMS

PubMed search – 1 publication

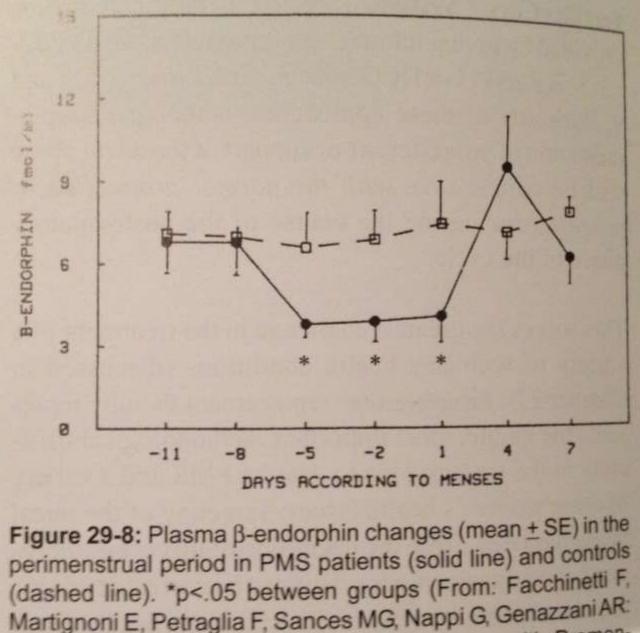
Clinical trial of naltrexone in premenstrual syndrome.

Chuong CJ, Coulam CB, Bergstralh EJ, O'Fallon WM, Steinmetz GI.

Obstet Gynecol. 1988 Sep;72(3 Pt 1):332-6.

.

Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota.



Martignoni E, Petraglia F, Sances MG, Nappi G, Genazzani AR: Premenstrual Fall of β-endorphin in Patients with Premenstrual Syndrome. Fertil Steril 47:570-573, 1987).

Naltrexone, PMS

20 women - double-blind, placebo-controlled, crossover study

Naltrexone 50mg – days 9-18 of cycle – to test inhibition of opiate withdrawal

Menstrual Distress Questionnaire (\$100 for 50 copies)

The mean scores dropped 28 points on naltrexone (P = .016).

Naltrexone alleviates many PMS symptoms and may be an effective treatment for this syndrome.....but Nausea, decreased appetite and dizziness

Naltrexone – opioid receptor antagonist

Endogenous Opioid Peptides

- Endorphins
- Enkephalins
- Dynorphins

Naltrexone blocks all of the receptors

Receptors CNS and PNS

- Epsilon (Endorphins)
- Delta (Enkephalins)
- Kappa (Dynorphins)
- Mu (Morphine)
- Sigma

NaPro Textbook Ch 41p550, Hilgers TW.

Naltrexone – mechanism of action

Naltrexone – antagonism and rebound

Consider Letrozole –

- 1. Ovulation Induction and subsequent increase in oestrogen production
 - Letrozole 20mg day 3 one day of cycle rebound increase in oestrogen
- 2. Suppression of oestrogen production through aromatase inhibition
 - Letrozole 2.5mg <u>every day continuously</u> a drop in oestrogen levels

The same medication has a profoundly different effect depending on how it is given

Naltrexone – antagonism and rebound

Consider Naltrexone –

- 1. Hoped to increase in endorphin production
 - Naltrexone 25mg bd <u>for 10 days</u>- (day 9-18) rebound increase in beta endorphins
- 2. Suppression of endorphin production through
 - Naltrexone 25mg bd <u>every day continuously</u> a drop in endorphin levels

The same medication has a profoundly different effect depending on how it is given

Naltrexone, PMS

Now Consider Low Dose Naltrexone 3-4.5mg nightly

- Naltrexone has a daily circadian rhythm
- Briefly and temporarily blocking endorphin receptors at night triggers a rebound stimulation of endorphins the following day
- x 3-4 fold increase in Beta Endorphin Levels B. Bihari
- x 12-15 fold increase in enkephalin levels J. Smith
- Vastly superior to naltrexone 25mg BD for 10 days (9-18) of cycle

Naltrexone, PMS

The International Institute for Restorative Reproductive Medicine
www.iirrm.org – We intend to do a clinical trial with LDN 3-4.5mg nightly

Interested doctors – please contact us!

- Clinical experience in treating PMS is 80% response
- Many say I have my life back I am me again!!

Low Dose Naltrexone

New uses of an old drug see www.lowdosenaltrexone.org

A proposed different mechanism of action

Naltrexone temporarily and briefly blocks opioid receptors, triggering a rebound increase in endogenous opioid production

Improving endogenous endorphins has multiple beneficial effects for endorphin deficient patients

Current concepts of beta-endorphin physiology in female reproductive dysfunction

<u>Elevated or high levels of beta-endorphin</u> have been associated with exercise-associated amenorrhea, stress-associated amenorrhea, and polycystic ovarian syndrome.(High Dose Naltrexone 25mg BD) PPVI, Omaha.

<u>Depressed or low levels</u> of <u>beta-endorphin</u> have been associated with PMS and menopause, (Endometriosis – Hilgers)(Low Dose Naltrexone 3-4.5mg nightly)

Galway, Ireland

Fertility and Sterility 1990. Seifer DB et al, Yale University School of Medicine

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/2226908

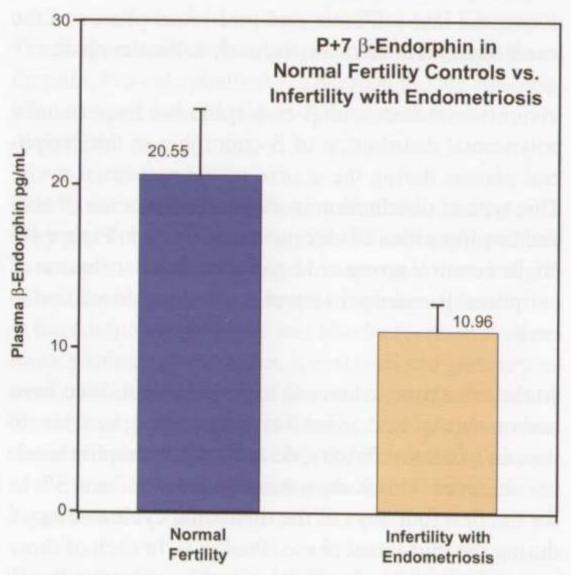


Figure 41-18: Plasma beta-endorphin levels during the luteal phase (Peak +7) in women of normal fertility versus those with infertility due to endometriosis (*p*<.01) (From: Pope Paul VI Institute research, 2004).

The Medical and Surgical Practice of NaProTECHNOLOGY

Table 43-7: Incidence of Endometriosis in Patients with PCOD¹ (N=55)

	n	%
With endometriosis	28	50.9
No endometriosis	27	49.1

^{1.} As determined at the time of laparoscopy.

From: Pope Paul VI Institute research. 2004.

Current concepts of beta-endorphin physiology in female reproductive dysfunction

Not a case ofEither /Or

But rather Both / And

We should consider Naltrexone in both low and high dose

Endorphin Stimulation

- Immune modifying effect
 - Intestinal
 - Local effects
 - Central effects
- Mood enhancement
- Increased energy levels

Endorphin Stimulation

- Immune modifying effect
 - Local effects Reduces pro-inflammatory cytokines

Interleukin (2,6,12), TNF (Tumor Necrosis Factor) alpha, Gamma Interferon

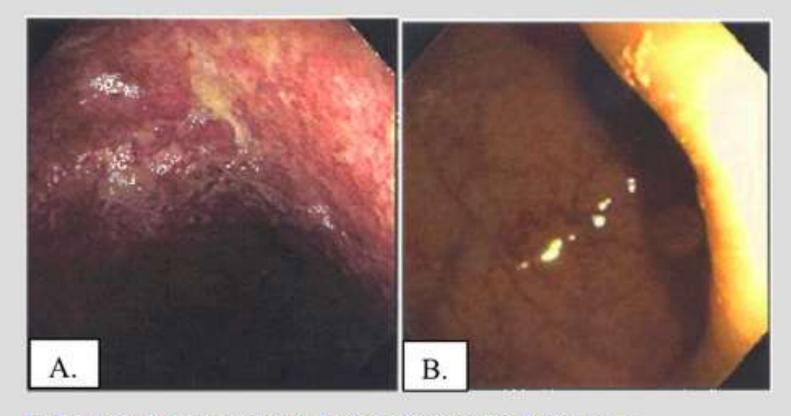
Cause inflammation from wbc and macrophages

Naltrexone influences mu, kappa and delta receptors locally

Central effect increases endogenous enkephalins (Metenkephalin) centrally to heal the bowel.

Professor Jill Smith - Am J. Gastro 2007.





Endoscopic Improvement in Crohn's Colitis with Naltrexone

Figure A: Shown is the rectum of a subject with active Crohn's Disease before starting therapy with naltrexone 4.5 mg/day. The mucosa is ulcerated, edematous, and inflamed.

Figure B. Shows the same area of the rectum in the same patient four weeks after naltrexone therapy. The lining is now healed, ulcers resolved, and the mucosa is healthy.

Professor Jill Smith – Am J. Gastro 2007.

Effect of LDN 4.5mg a day – treated 17 patients

- 89% improvement in Crohns Disease
- 67% in remission

• 70% -previous failed TNF alpha inhibitor – Infliximab (Remicade)

Professor Jill Smith – Am J. Gastro 2007.

Effect of LDN 4.5mg a day – treated 17 patients

- 89% improvement in Crohns Disease
- 67% in remission
- 70% -previous failed TNF alpha inhibitor treatment –
- Infliximab (Remicade) \$ 5,000⁺ per infusion repeatedly for Crohn's.
- LDN is \$ 30-50 per month!

Probably Placebo!



You need a Randomized placebo-controlled trial.

Naltrexone promotes mucosal healing in active Crohn's disease: 2011

Randomized placebo-controlled trial.

Digestive Diseases and sciences 2011

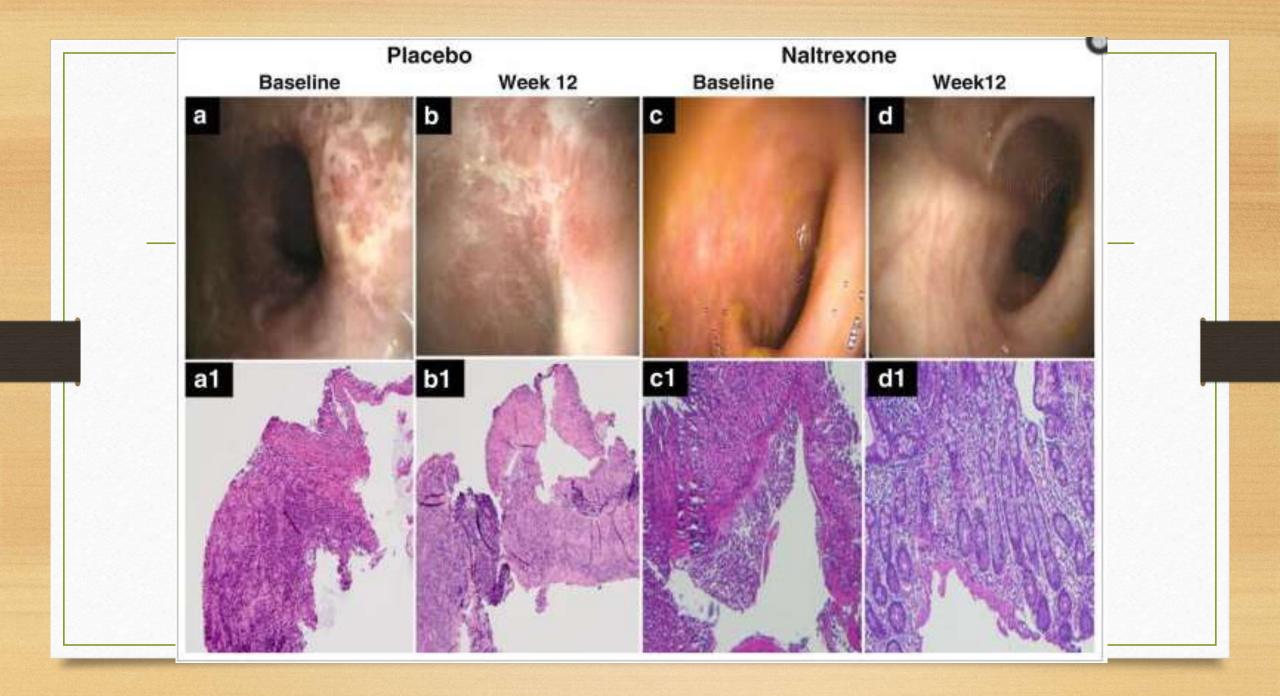
Smith JP, Bingaman SI, Ruggiero F, Mauger DT, Mukherjee A, McGovern CO, Zagon IS.

Department of Medicine, The Pennsylvania State University, College of Medicine, GI Medicine H-045, 500 University Drive, Hershey, PA 17033, USA. ismith2@psu.edu

Professor Jill Smith Digestive Diseases and sciences 2011

Effect of LDN 4.5mg a day – treated 40 patients for 12 weeks

- 88% Clinical response rate compared to 40% in Placebo group (P = 0.009)
- 78% endoscopic response compared to 28% in placebo group (P=0.008)
- 33% remission compared to 6% remission in placebo group
- Naltrexone improves clinical and inflammatory activity of subjects with moderate to severe Crohn's disease compared to placebo-treated controls.



Naltrexone promotes mucosal healing in active Crohn's disease: 2011

Randomized placebo-controlled trial.

Digestive Diseases and sciences 2011 Impact factor 2012 2.260

American Journal of Gastroenterology - Impact factor 2012 7.553

New England Journal of Medicine - Impact factor 2012 51.658

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3381945/

Probably Advertising Revenue



You need an expensive patented drug to publish your data!

Editor NEJM Forced to Resign in Dispute with the Medical Journal

<u>July 27, 1999</u>

Dr. Kassirer declined to provide specifics of the dispute beyond saying it involved sharp differences in "administrative and publishing issues."

.....other editors said the dispute reflects tensions generated as the society seeks to generate more revenues to expand its influence in an increasingly competitive and political world of health care.

Clinical experience with LDN

• Started to prescribe it in 2004

Low Dose Naltrexone



LDN – plays an important part

"NaProTechnology - A Multi-factorial approach to the chronic problem of Infertility" - P Boyle, J Stanford

http://www.fertilitycare.net/documents/NPTMultifactorialApproach.pdf

• Paper from Kaunas, Lithuania June 2011

Possible Diagnoses from NaProTechnology Evaluation

Hormonal	Ultrasound	Surgical	Other
Low Progesterone	Immature follicle	Endometriosis	Limited (hostile) Mucus
Low Oestradiol	Partial rupture	Pelvic Adhesions	Adrenal Fatigue
Poor Follicular Function	Luteinised unruptured follicle	Blocked Fallopian Tubes	Chronic Endometritis
Corpus Luteum Insufficiency	Delayed Rupture	Hydrosalpinx	Endorphin Deficiency
Polycystic Ovaries	Afollicularism	Fibroid	Food Intolerance
Reduced ovarian reserve	Absent Cumulus Oopherous	Polyp	Nutritional Deficiency
Hypothyroidism		Uterine Septum	Immune dysfunction

LDN – plays an important part



Low Dose Naltrexone

Clinical Experience since 2004

- LDN is used to treat Clinical Endorphin Deficiency
- About 50% of fertility patients
- Safe to continue during pregnancy and breastfeeding

Clinical Endorphin Deficiency

- 1. PMS
- 2. Polycystic ovaries or Endometriosis
- 3. TEBB
- 4. Fatigue
- 2 or more of these
- 5. Low Mood
- 6. Anxiety
- 7. Sleep
- 8. Family History of Autoimmunity

Clinical Endorphin Deficiency

- Available from brochure
 - http://fertilitycare.net/documents/LDNInfoAug13aa.pdf

Side Effects

- 1. Vivid Dreams
- 2. Sleep Disturbance
- 3. Nausea for about 2 weeks
- 4. Headache
- 5. Dry Mouth over 95% acceptable

Drug Interactions

- 1. Morphine
- 2. Codeine
- 3. Alcohol

- Safe to combine with steroids
- Discontinue 2 days before surgery and resume after stopping pain relief

No longer an Experimental Treatment

- It is a licensed drug but at a much higher dose (50mg) for a different indication drug addiction
- A growing number publications at LDN Website
 - MS, Crohn's and fibromyalgia
- A proven potent immune modifying treatment through a double blinded randomized placebo controlled trial 2011

Low Dose Naltrexone

Dosage

• 3mg nightly

or

• 4.5mg nightly

Low Dose Naltrexone

- Needs to be specially compounded as
- Fast release preparation
 - Not lactose or calcium carbonate filler
 - Preferably microcrystalline filler (avicel)
- Suppliers listed
 - <u>www.lowdosenaltrexone.org</u>

Clinical Experience

- 1. Case C 3 previous failed IVF cycles
- 2. Six recurrent miscarriages

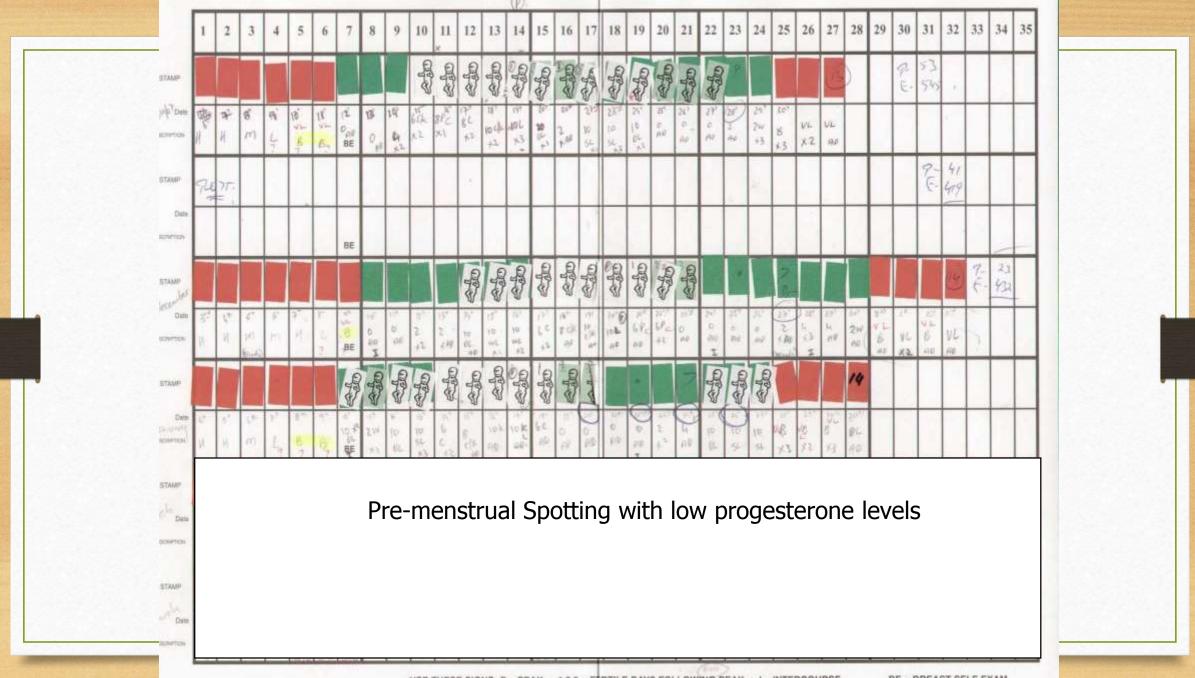
Case C

- Gravida 1 (with IVF), Para 0,
- Female age 38, Male age 38
- Mild Endometriosis
- 12 previous cycles of clomid
- 3 attempts at IUI
- 3 previous failed IVF

5 Years of primary infertility

Case C – NPT Diagnoses

- Endometriosis
- Oligoasthenozoospermia
- Clinical endorphin deficiency
- Low progesterone and oestradiol combined poor follicle function and corpus luteum insufficiency Obvious from Chart
- Food Intolerance to eggs



Case C – NPT Treatments

- Clinical endorphin deficiency significant
 - Naltrexone 4.5mg nightly

- Food Intolerance to eggs
 - Change in diet

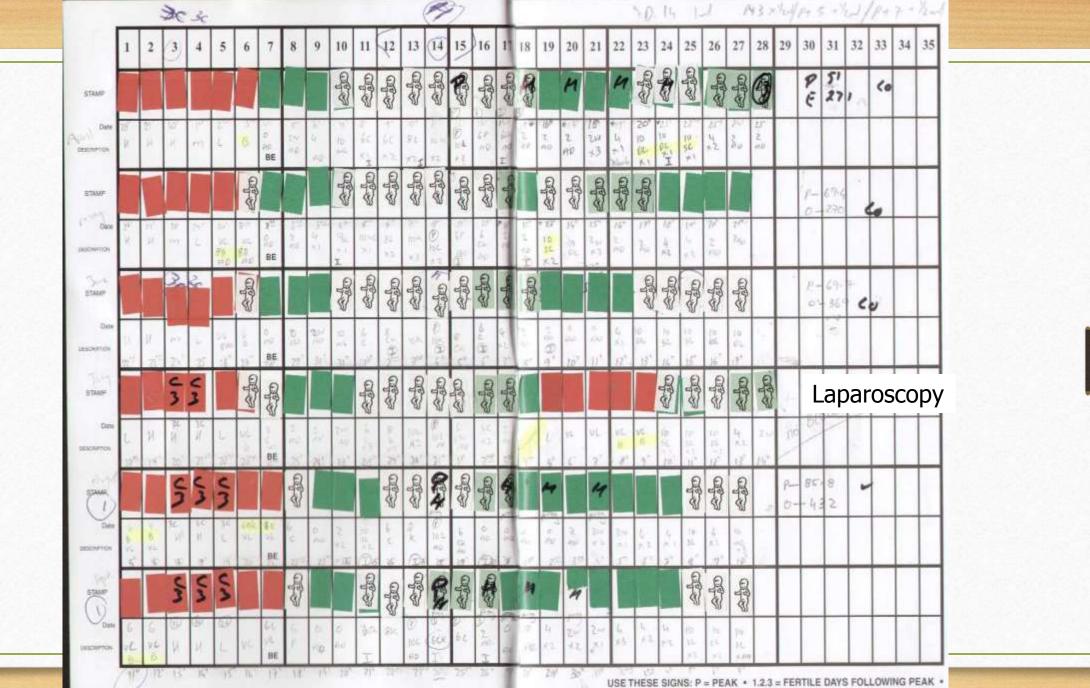
Case C – NPT Treatments

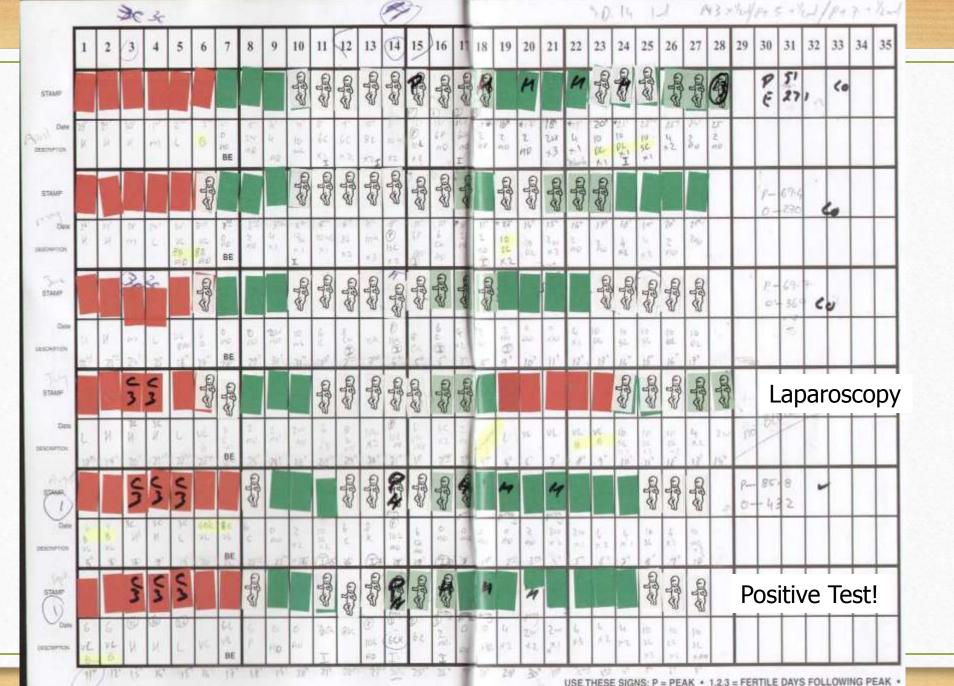
- Endometriosis
 - Laparoscopy and diathermy June 2008
- Oligoasthenozoospermia
 - CoEnzyme Q10 200mg daily
 - Tamoxifen 20mg daily
 - FertilityPlus for men
 - Lifestyle (cigarettes, alcohol, caffeine, stress)

Case C – NPT Treatments

- Low progesterone and oestradiol combined poor follicle function and corpus luteum insufficiency
 - Clomiphene 150mg daily x 3 days, starting on day 3 of the cycle with HCG 5000 iu mid cycle to facilitate follicle rupture and HCG 2,500 iu on days 3, 5 and 7 after ovulation







Case C – NPT Pregnancy Treatments

- Positive pregnancy test in September 2008
- Cyclogest 400mg pv nocte until 14 weeks
- Naltrexone 4.5mg nocte until 38 weeks



Case C – NPT Pregnancy outcome

• They had a healthy baby boy by normal vaginal delivery weighing 3.400kg in June 2009, when mum was 40 years old.

Case C – repeat attempt

- Second attempt in February 2010
- Same treatment approach successfully conceived by September 2010.

- Delivered a second healthy boy at term 19th May 2011
 - Mum 42 years old.

Case C – Comments

- We continued Naltrexone throughout pregnancy in this case because the patient felt dramatically better preconception with treatment.
- It appears she had significant endorphin deficiency which needed ongoing treatment
- Over 200 pregnancies with naltrexone

Case 2

• 6 Recurrent Miscarriages

- Presented Feb 2005
- Female 33yrs. Male 40yrs.

- G6 SA6 from Oct 02 Jan 05
 - Miscarriage at 5 to 9 weeks each time

- Dx:
 - Balanced Translocation Ch 7 and 18
 - 30% miscarriage risk every time
 - 5% risk abnormal baby

- Additional Dx:
 - Uterine Fibroid 2 x 3cm anterior fibroid

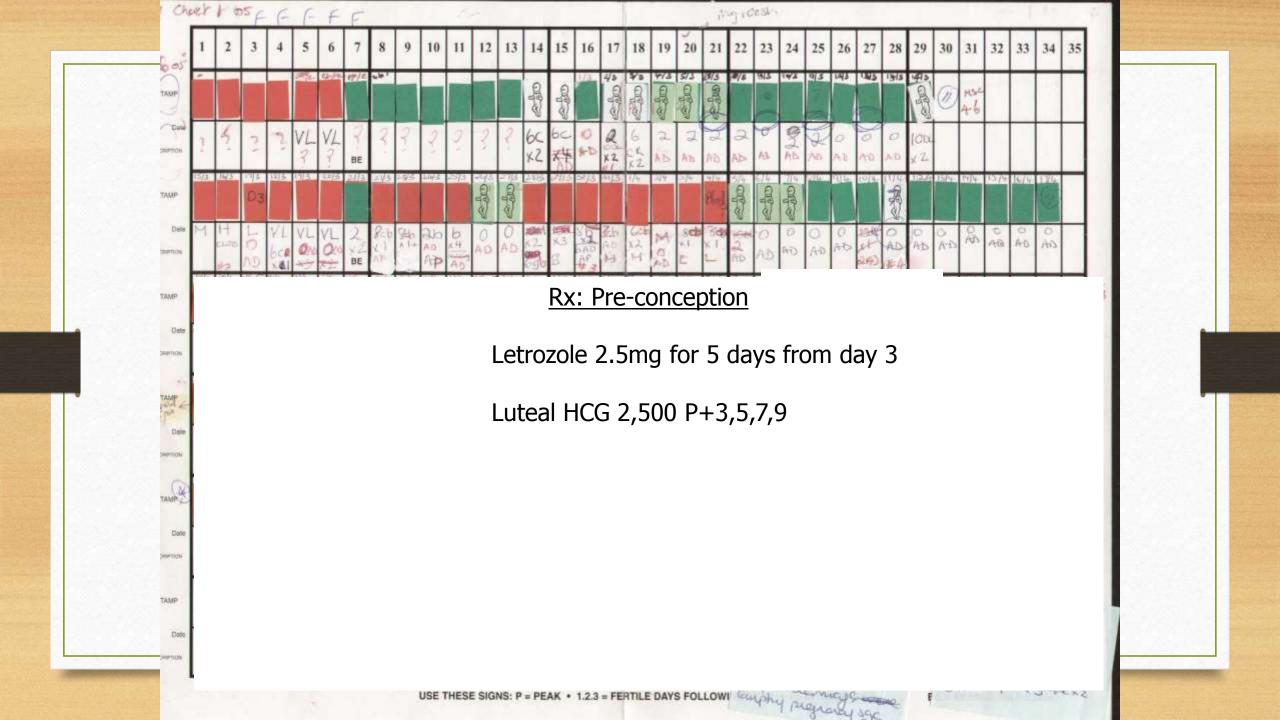
- Normal clotting
- Normal day 21 progesterone

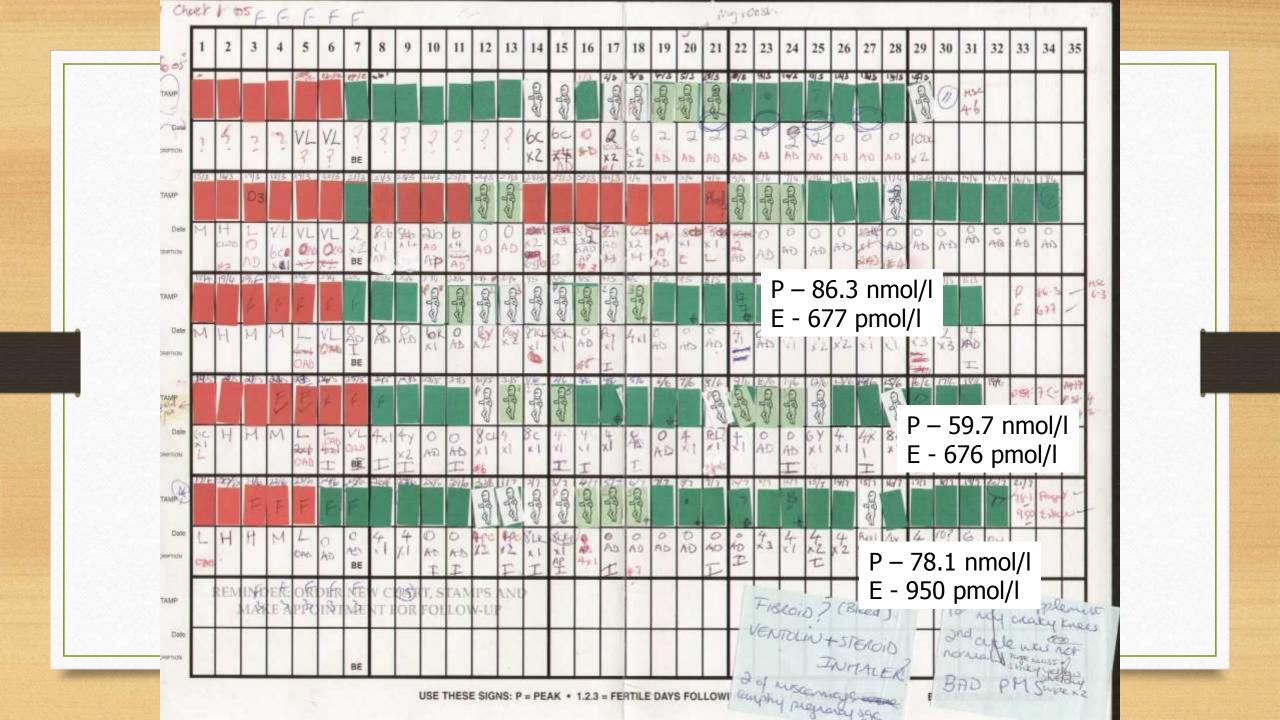
• Unexplained why 6 miscarriages?

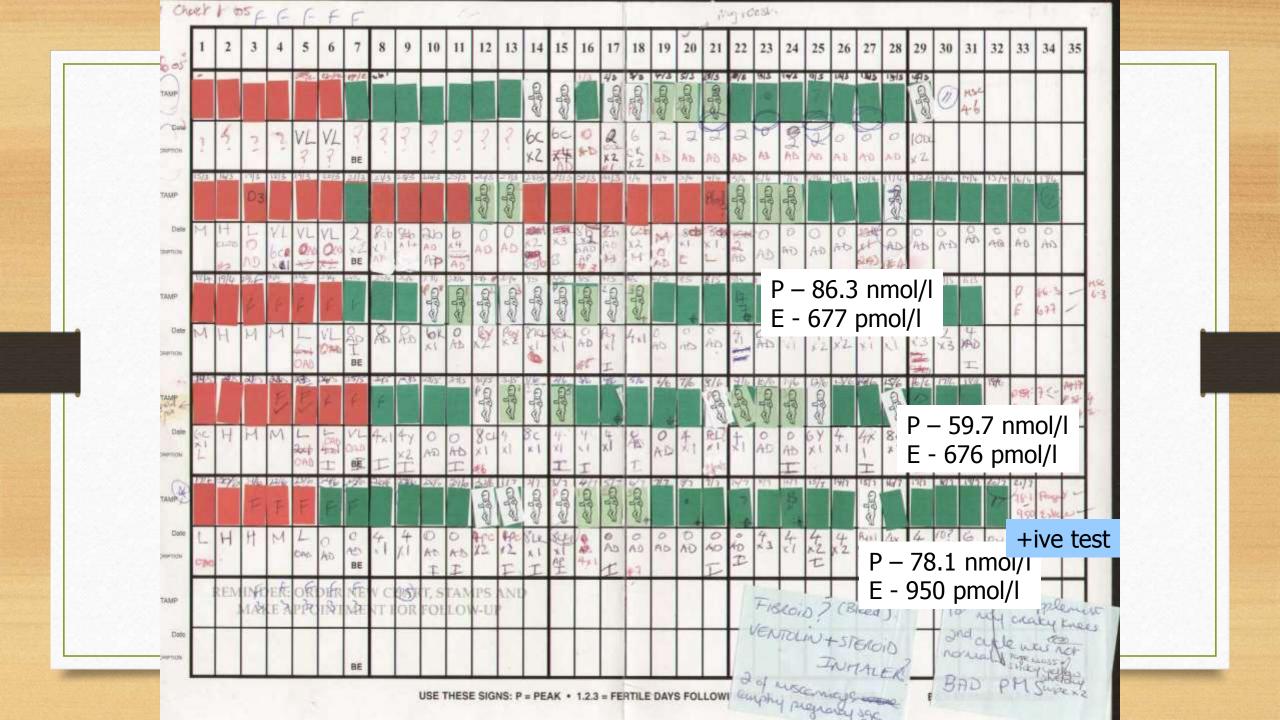
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- Additional Problems with NPT
 - Moderate PMT symptoms for 7 days
 - Abnormal bleeding
 - Low Progesterone on P+7

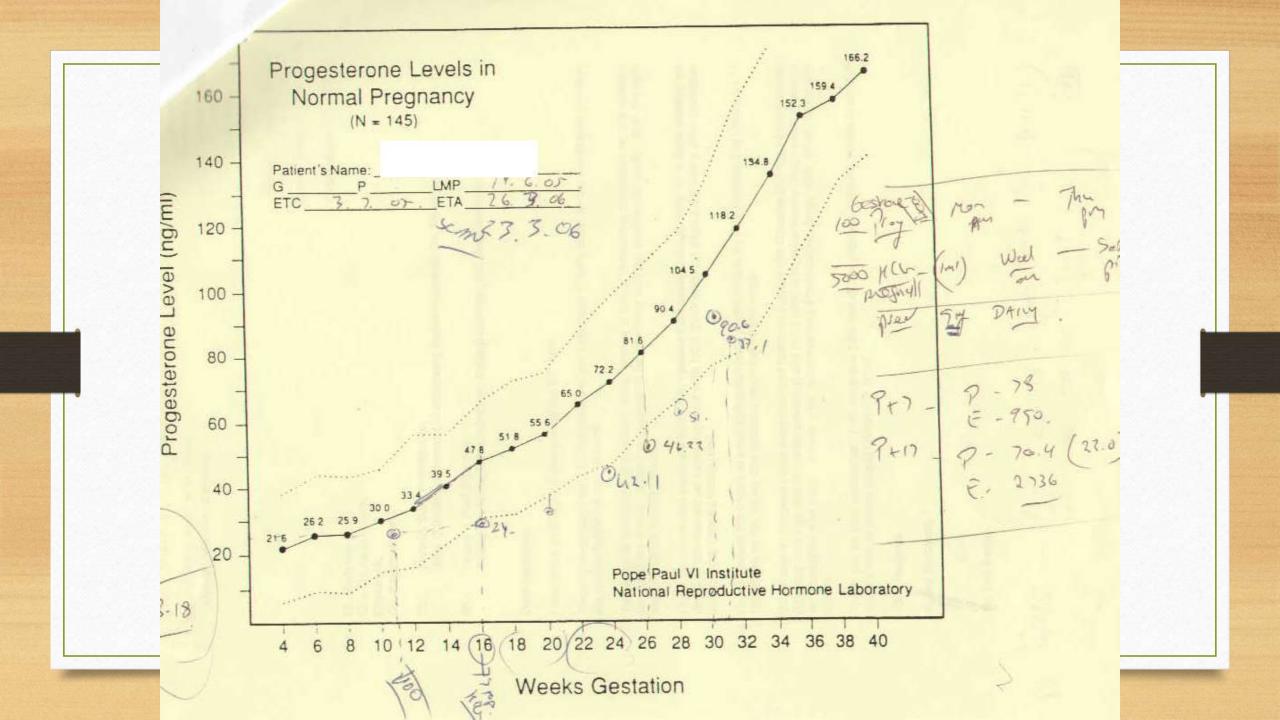
• Query "Some immune factor?"







- Rx: Post-conception
 - Gestone 200mg im twice weekly
 - HCG 5000 sc twice weekly
 - Prednisolone 5mg daily





- Rx: Post-conception
 - Gestone 200mg im twice weekly
 - HCG 5000 sc twice weekly
 - Prednisolone 5mg daily

Continued treatment until 35 weeks

- Baby Boy @ 37 weeks gestation
- 6th March 2006
- 5lb 5oz
- NVD with Vacuum
- Mum and Baby are well!

G.C. - 6 Miscarriages with LDN

• Returned for another attempt Aug 2006

- Conceived subsequently again
 - With treatment pre-conception

- Adjusted treatment
- LDN (Low Dose Naltrexone)

Previous Problems

Needed to continue treatment throughout pregnancy

Low Progesterone persisted

Baby smaller than avg. 5lb 5oz

• Add New Immune modifying treatment

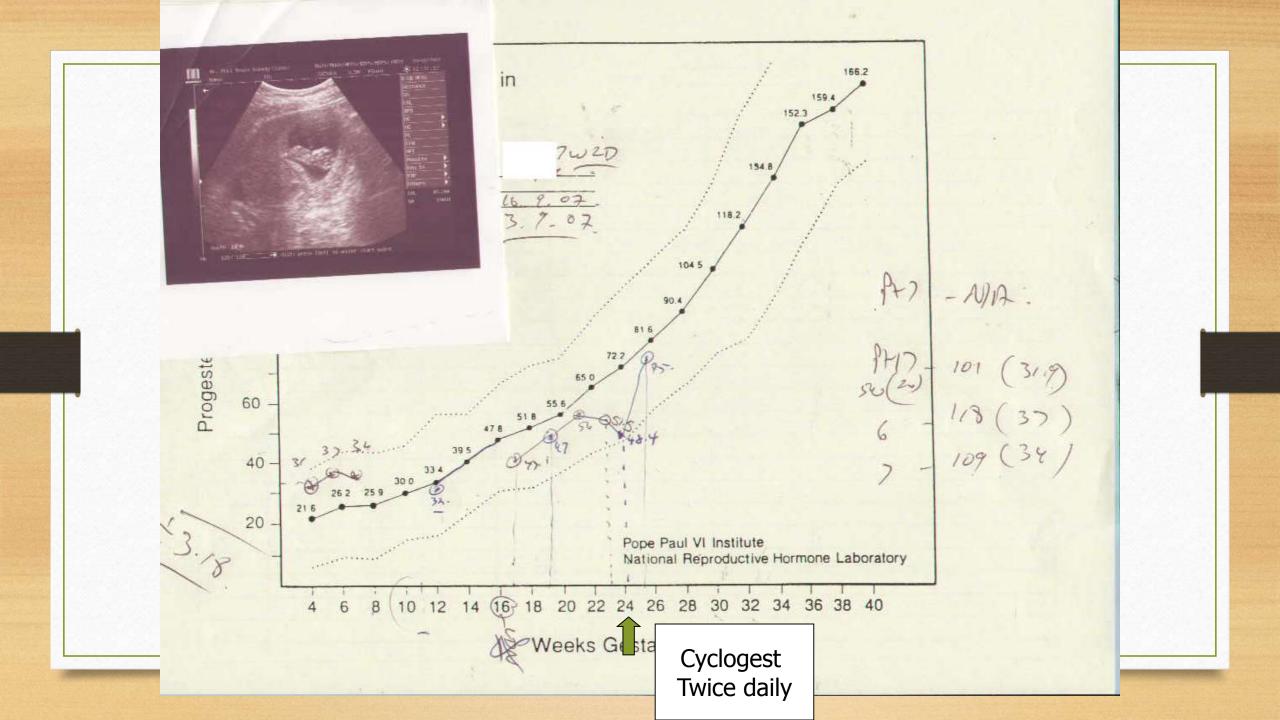
• LDN – Low Dose Naltrexone 4.5mg nightly

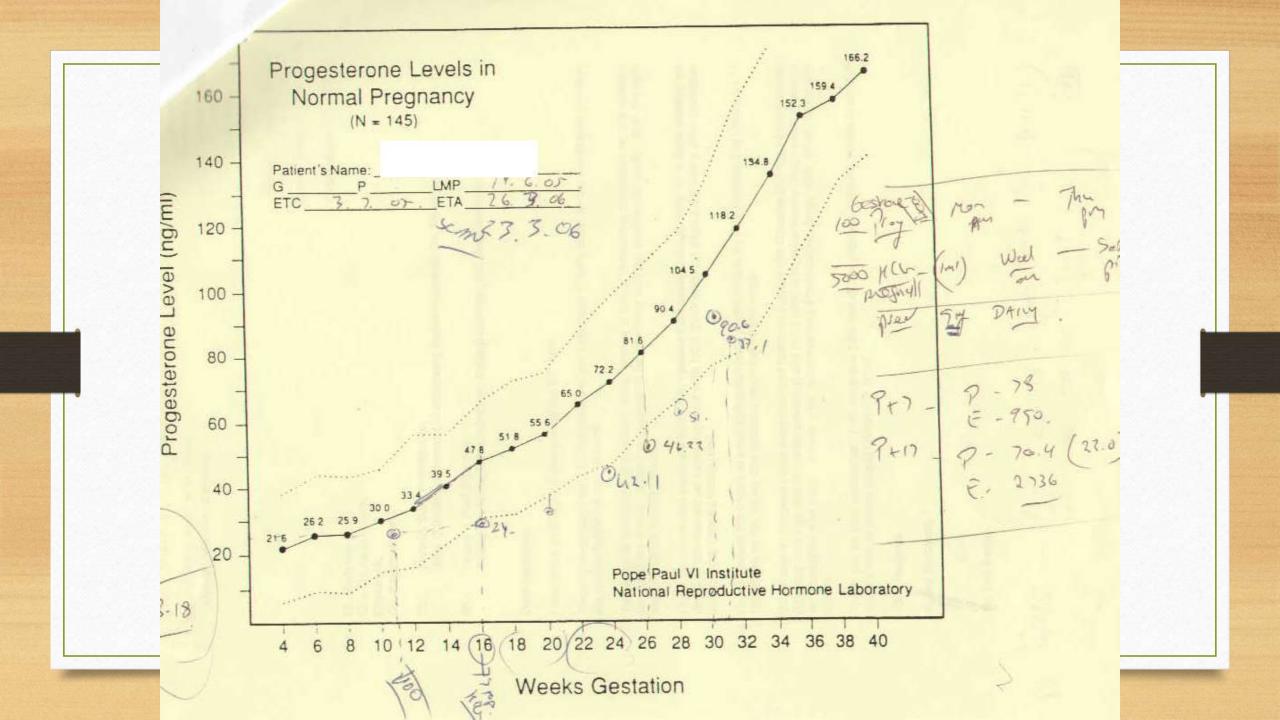
Hoped

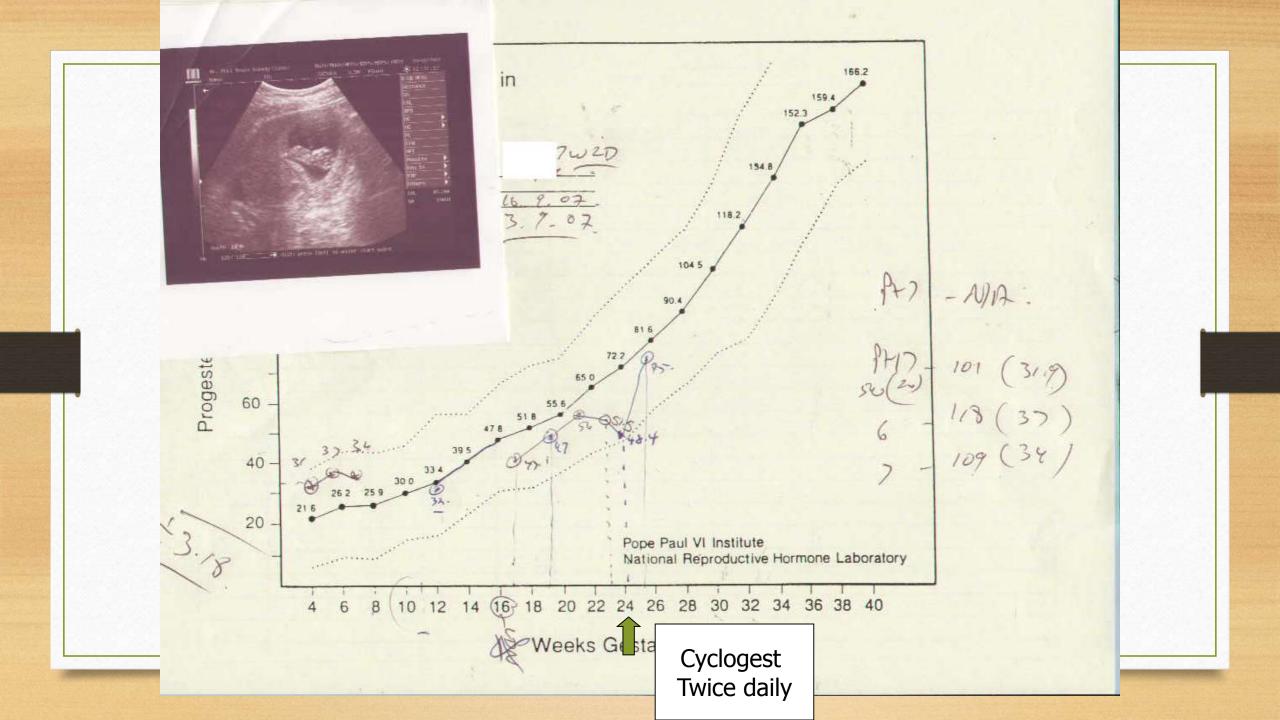
Less need to continue progesterone treatment throughout pregnancy

Better Progesterone levels

Bigger baby

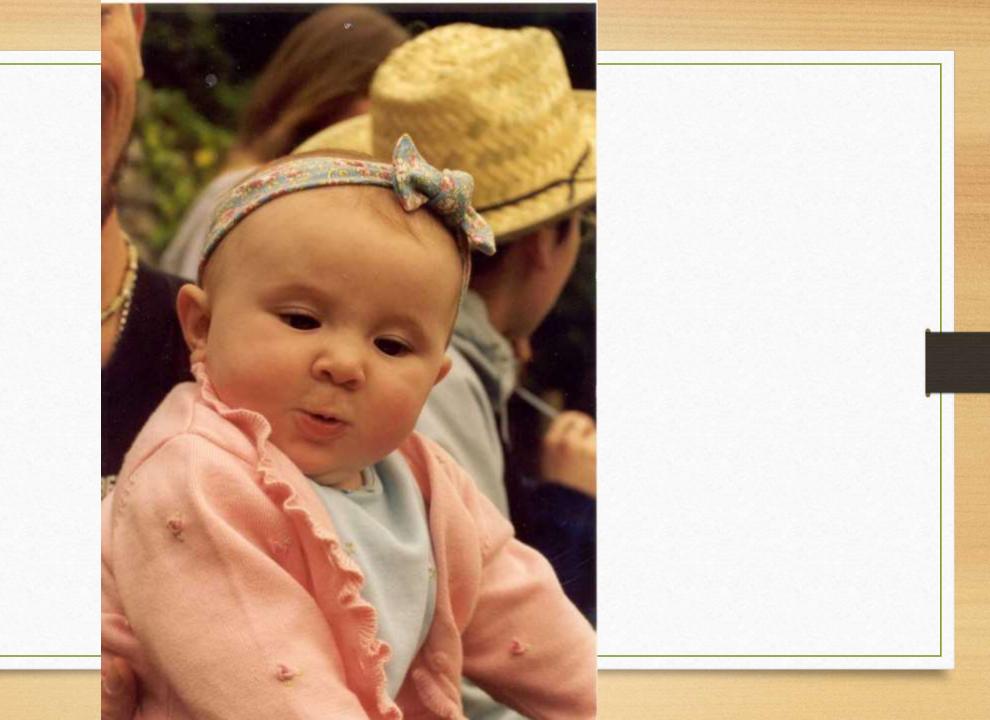






Successful pregnancy

- Female 7lb 3 oz
- Full term
- NVD Sept 2007



- Compounding Pharmacist
 - **■** Dose
 - 1.5mg, 3.0mg or 4.5 mg fast release tablet nightly before sleeping (9pm -2am)

This will give a 3 fold increase in beta endorphin levels.

Improving Endorphin Levels

- Has a "Stimulatory effect" on the immune system
- **■** Improves immune function

Improving Endorphin Levels

- Halts the progression of HIV
- Halts the immune system when it begins to attack "SELF" (Auto-immune illness)
- Reduces Lifetime risk of developing cancer

Low Dose Naltrexone - LDN

- Obviously fantastic treatment
 - Low toxicity "first do no harm"
 - **■** Inexpensive
 - Seems Effective Clinically
 - Easy to take
 - No Need for specialised Physician training
 - Few Ethical issues
- Anticipate widespread use and acceptance very quickly

Low Dose Naltrexone - LDN

Surprise!!



Huge resistance among many doctors to even try it out!

Doctor Resistance

- Unlicensed for Auto-immune disorders
- Experimental treatment
- Not "evidence based" medicine
- Doctors not covered by medical insurance

Too Risky!

Up the Creek with a Paddle

Beat MS and Many Autoimmune Disorders with Low Dose Naltrexone (LDN)

Mary Anne Boyle Bradley

Infertile 36y female with R.Arth.

- Diagnosis of PCOD and 10 years of Infertility, previous success in our programme
- First episode of Acute onset of R. Arth.
 - When trying to conceive for the second time
- Diagnosed by Rheumatologist
- Resistant to NSAIDS
- Advised Methotrexate (then cannot conceive!)

Infertile 36y female with R.Arth.

LDN

- Rapid 80% improvement in symptoms
- No Side effects
- Conceived after 2 cycles of LDN and other fertility treatment

■ Successful pregnancy

Case Presentations

- Premenstrual Syndrome
- Severe Bipolar Disorder
- The Future.....Pre-Treatment!



- Dx Age 18
 - 5 laparoscopies
 - Oral Contraceptive Pill
 - Zoladex x 3 years made pain bearable
- Deferred University studies



- Depression
- Profound fatigue
- Underactive thyroid
- Anxiety
- Joint pain
- Severe PMS 7 days each cycle & brown menstrual bleeding Hospitalised repeatedly for investigation and treatment of pain

2007 – Started NaPro

- LDN 4.5mg nightly
- Diet based on IgG antibody testing



- It has completely changed my life
- For the first time in a long time, I can say I have a life

- Depression gone
- Profound fatigue gone
- Underactive thyroid on a lower dose of medication
- Anxiety gone
- Joint pain gone
- Severe PMS 7 days each cycle now 2 days and mild
- brown menstrual bleeding gone
- Pain -



- A complete transformation has occurred physically, mentally and emotionally
- For the first time in my life I feel like a complete human being and not a multitude of symptoms
- I was helpless and a hopeless case before this treatment

Bipolar Disorder - 28 year old female

- On Lithium for 10 years
- Previously hospitalised
- Trying to conceive and wean off lithium
- Part of treatment included LDN

- Delivered 3 years ago 2010 Never had a relapse
- Maintained on LDN

- 31yo G0 P0 − 1st Visit Feb 2008
- Engaged wedding July 2008
 - +++PMS, Fatigue,
 - +FH Sister PCOS
- Not Sexually Active
- Not trying to conceive ...yet!

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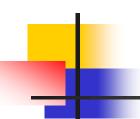
The Future.....

- Peak +7
 - Low Progesterone
 - Low Oestradiol

Endorphin Deficiency



- Treatment
 - Cyclogest Peak +3 for 10 nights
 - Naltrexone 4.5mg



- Treatment
 - Improved Progesterone
 - PMS gone
 - Energy and mood improved

But.....still abnormal bleeding...



Ultrasound May 08.....

B 22+14+13. @ Fell-de



700.

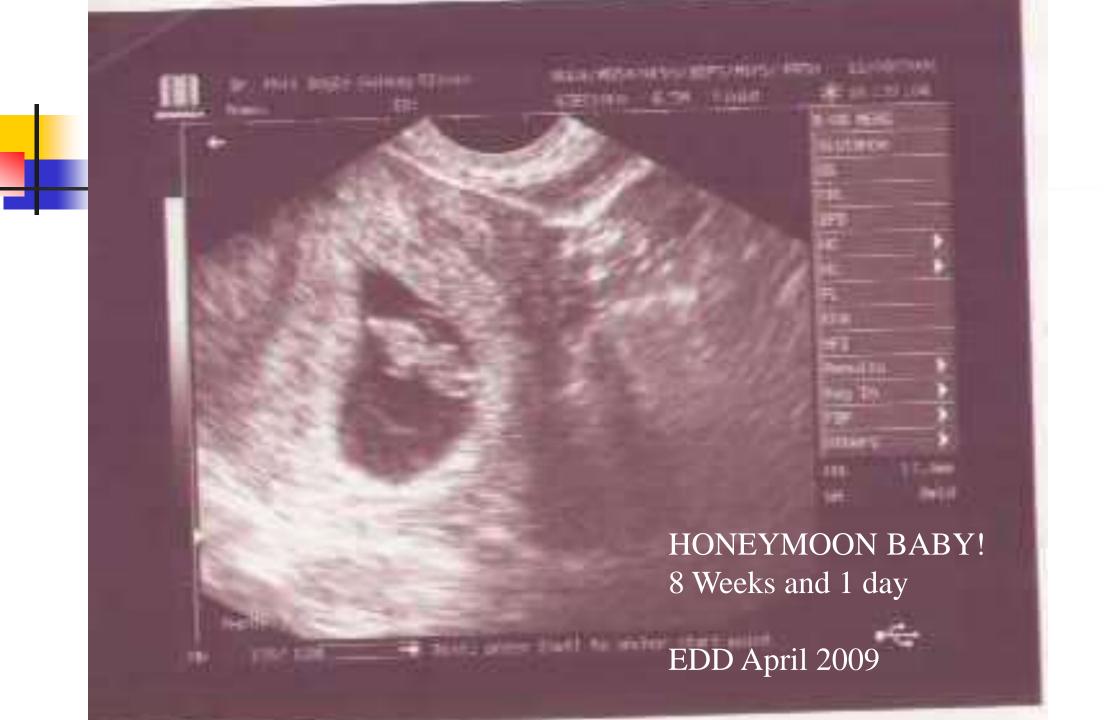




- Ultrasound May 08
 - PCOS
 - Endometrial Polyp
- Surgical referral
 - Hysteroscopy & Polypectomy July 08



- Healthy and Happy
 - PMS, Energy
- Normal Chart
 - Bleeding, Mucus
- Normal hormones
 - Progesterone, Oestradiol



Problem was <u>identified</u> and <u>solved</u>even before it officially existed!

What would have happened without LDN and NaProTechnology?

The Future.....for LDN

It is safe....

- Doctors need to consider the mounting clinical and published evidence in favour of LDN!
- Proven Immune modifying treatment Placebo RCT.

Restore normal function



Any Questions?

