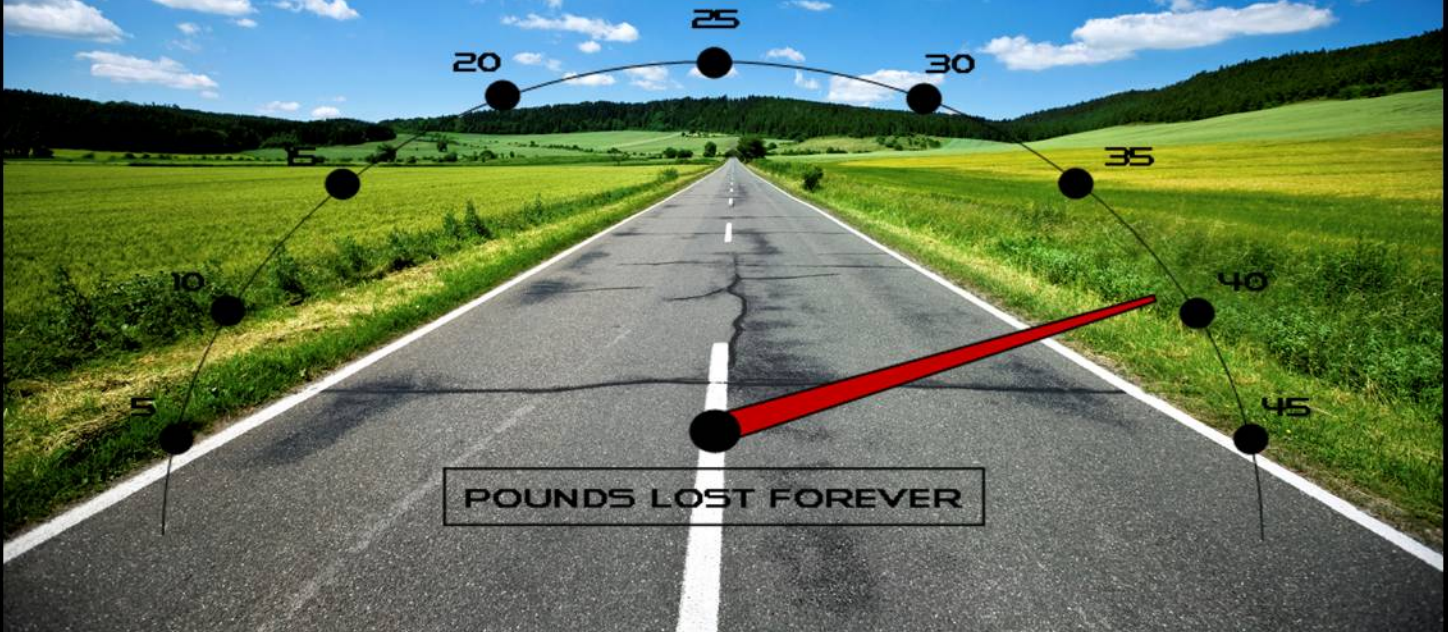


S.P.E.E.D.



SPECIAL REPORT

HCG & WEIGHT LOSS: ENOUGH ALREADY!

BY JEFF THIBOUTOT & MATT SCHOENEGER

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We encourage you to pass this report on to anyone who you think would benefit from the information.

INTRODUCTION

This special report is intended for those who are currently using the hormone HCG, those contemplating using HCG, and for practitioners who currently use or recommended HCG for weight loss.

We were going to include this information in our upcoming weight loss book, S.P.E.E.D. However, due to the spike in the number of clients asking about HCG, as well as the number of clinics that are using and promoting the use of HCG for weight loss, and the fact that we are writing a weight loss book based on solid scientific evidence, we felt compelled to make this information available now.

As you may have guessed from the title of this report, we feel the use of HCG for weight loss is virtually useless. To understand why, continue reading.

WHAT IS HCG?

HCG is a hormone called human chorionic gonadotropin. In women, this hormone is produced in large quantities during pregnancy. (Lijesen) At no point is this hormone produced by males! The supply of this hormone is harvested from the urine of pregnant women and the typical clinical use of HCG is for certain infertility problems. (Lijesen)

HISTORY OF THE USE OF HCG FOR WEIGHT LOSS

Dr. Simeons, in 1954, originated the idea that the use of daily injections of HCG along with a specific 500 calorie diet would be a great treatment for obesity. (Simeons) This idea grew out of the Dr. Simeons experience of using HCG to treat young boys suffering from Frohlich syndrome (Lijesen). He published a paper in the Lancet medical journal on HCG and obesity. (Simeons) Dr. Simeons “claimed that overweight patients who follow the Simeons therapy will a) lose weight quickly, b) not feel weak, c) not be hungry, and d) lose fat from those parts of the body where it tends to remain the longest during normal dieting” (Lijesen, p.237). In 1967, Dr. Simeons published a book on his approach called, Pounds and Inches - a new approach to obesity. This is the book that is often

offered with the current HCG programs. This is also the premise of Kevin Trudeau's recent book [The Weight Loss Cure They Don't Want You to Know About](#).

Since 1954, there have been more than 20 papers published on HCG and its effects on weight loss as well as 24 studies done to test the efficacy of it. Of the 24 studies, 14 were randomized controlled trials (RCTs). RCTs are considered to have much higher validity and reliability than non-randomized trials and, if done properly, are able to demonstrate whether or not a treatment works to some degree.

Clearly, there has been a large amount of time and energy spent over the past 50 years looking at HCG. There are some strong claims about what HCG can do. If these claims are true then it would certainly seem like a breakthrough therapy for weight problems. If the claims are false, then it would seem to be a great placebo. Whether any of these claims are true will be discussed next.

HOW USEFUL IS HCG FOR WEIGHT LOSS?

As was mentioned above, there have actually been quite a few RCTs done on HCG. This means, based on the results of these studies, that we should have a good idea how affective this hormone is for weight loss. So, after more than a dozen RCTs on HCG, it can be said, very confidently, that there is virtually no evidence, of any quality, that demonstrates that the use of HCG has any benefit when it comes to losing weight. Here are just a few quotes from the literature.

“We conclude that there is no scientific evidence that HCG is effective in the treatment of obesity; it does not bring about weight-loss or fat-redistribution, nor does it reduce hunger or induce a feeling of well-being” (Lijesen, p.237).

“The injections of HCG however, provided no additional effects that could not be accounted for by the diet alone. We conclude, therefore, that HCG used in the manner prescribed by Simeons does not enhance the rate of weight loss, nor does it significantly reduce hunger or change the ratings of anxiety, hostility, or depression” (Greenway, p.463).

“We attempted to answer one question in this study - is HCG an effective adjunct to a rigidly imposed dietary regimen for weight reduction? On the basis of our results, the answer is negative.” (Stein, p.947)

The following chart displays the mean weight loss results found in the 14 RCTs between the HCG group and the control group (no HCG).

Results of 14 RCTs on the effectiveness of HCG for weight loss (Lijesen)			
Study	HCG group weight lost in lbs	Control group weight lost in lbs	Authors conclusion
Stein	15.8	15.5	Negative
Young	18.7	19.8	Negative
Shetty	20.46	20.68	Negative
Mens	19.8	28.16	Negative
Richter	12.76	13.42	Negative
Bosch	7.04	10.12	Negative
Greenway	19.36	17.82	Negative
Asher	20	11.1	Positive
Craig	6.4	8.9	Negative
Richter	10.78	13.86	Negative
Miller	12	10.3	Negative
Frank	12.3	11.5	Negative
Lebon	Data inaccurate	Data inaccurate	Positive
Carne	21	19	Negative

THE ANOMALY

We have to state that there is a single RCT that did seem to demonstrate a benefit from the HCG injections. This is the Asher et al study. The mean weight loss over 6 weeks for the HCG group was 20 pounds and for the control group 11.1 pounds. Therefore, the HCG group lost about 9 pounds more than the control group. This works out to a greater weight loss, per week, of about 1.5 pounds. These are significant differences and could

certainly be used to justify the use of HCG. However, there are a few caveats. First, this study used women only. This means that the affects of HCG on men is unknown and, based on this study, a recommendation for men to use HCG should not be given. Second, this is the only high quality study that has demonstrated a positive effect. Keeping in mind that this is 1 of 14 RCTs, the weight of the evidence is clearly negative. The third and final caveat is the fact that Stein et al duplicated the Asher et al study and found no benefit from the use of HCG. Until there is further positive evidence, the use of HCG for weight loss is unfounded. We would like to see a new study done using the latest technologies that is completely controlled through a metabolic ward setting.

WHAT ABOUT HCG PILLS AND SPRAYS?

Just when we thought it couldn't get any worse! There is not a single shred of quality evidence that these products have any physiological impact on the body. Do not waste your money. If someone tries to sell these products to you, ask them for a single study that demonstrated positive results using this form of the hormone. It is likely you will get a list of interesting but meaningless testimonials.

HOW IS HCG SUPPOSED TO CAUSE THE PURPORTED INCREDIBLE RESULTS?

Before concluding, we want to tackle one more issue about HCG. This issue deals with the apparent mechanism that HCG is supposed to modify in order to cause the positive results. HCG is supposed to “reset” the hypothalamus. The hypothalamus, a very small organ located deep within the brain, is a key player in the regulation of appetite. (French). However, since the 1950's there has been a significant increase in the understanding that the appetite and food intake are influenced by numerous factors. There have been many papers dedicated to this topic. One paper, *Recent advances in the physiology of eating*, states, “This advance has led to a greater understanding of the genetic, molecular, hormonal, neural, and behavioral mechanisms underlying the regulation of energy balance” (French, p.489). Another paper, *Eating behavior: lessons from the real world*, states, “Real-world studies have shown a wide array of physiologic, psychological, and social variables that can have potent and immediate effects on [food] intake” (deCastro, p.800). Even if HCG “reset” the hypothalamus, it is still not addressing the many other food intake mechanisms.

How does HCG “reset” the hypothalamus? There is nothing to back up this statement. The studies using HCG for weight loss have not demonstrated this “reset” affect. The statement sounds impressive, but lacks any credibility. It would be great if this hormone had the ability to modify how the hypothalamus works so that hunger and food intake would naturally be decreased. At this point, there is no support for this conclusion.

TO THOSE USING THIS PRODUCT OR THINKING ABOUT USING IT

We empathize with those of you who have struggled to lose weight. There is no doubt that many of you find yourself looking for something that will finally get you the results you have been longing for. We get no pleasure in telling you that HCG is a waste of your time and money. But, we feel that it is our duty, as health and fitness professionals who want to use evidence-based interventions, to offer information that is factually based. We can no longer stand idly by while our clients, friends, and acquaintances get duped into using this product for weight loss. This can mean that our conclusions may step on some peoples’ toes, resulting in a number of ill feelings. We have no ill feelings towards those of you who have used this product. We hope, in fact, that you have actually lost a good amount of weight from the low calorie diet and found a way to keep it off. We also hope that those of you who are using HCG and those contemplating using this product will consider the factual information presented here and not the meaningless (scientifically speaking) testimonials, when considering the use of HCG. This does not mean that there are not other options.

There are, in fact, certain hormones that could help with weight loss. HCG is not one of them. Whether other hormones, such as thyroid, testosterone, and progesterone, could be helpful to you will depend on your specific circumstances. Getting your levels checked and working with a competent medical professional who uses bio-identical hormones may help with your body’s ability to achieve a healthy weight. Additionally, there are a few nutrition products, certain nutrition protocols, psychological and social interventions, and other lifestyle components that can actually improve your chances of achieving and maintaining a healthy weight. This is what we cover in detail in our upcoming book S.P.E.E.D.

TO PRACTITIONERS WHO USE THIS PRODUCT

We are disappointed with those of you who should know better. Unless we have missed the multiple quality studies that show that HCG works better than a placebo, you should not be recommending or using this hormone for weight loss. Shouldn't there be some quality evidence for the use of something before it is provided? Where is the concept of "evidenced-based" medicine in all of this? You should all know that an endless stream of glowing testimonials is generally worthless in a scientific, evidence-based, viewpoint. When determining whether or not a specific type of intervention works, testimonials should be disregarded if they are not corroborated with some solid evidence.

CONCLUSION

We hope that we have made it clear that the use of HCG for weight loss is useless on a physiological level. This means that it will not cause changes that will lead to more weight loss or a decrease in appetite or less fatigue. There may be a placebo affect working, which can improve adherence to the diet, but that is the extent of its positive effects. To us, this is an expensive and bothersome (daily injections) placebo. There are other interventions that can have a meaningful impact on the biological, psychological, and social aspects of appetite and weight regulation.

If you feel that we have not accurately represented the topic, we would like to hear from you. However, we would appreciate that any responses are supported with solid evidence. We really don't want to hear how "HCG worked great for me" or "I heard that it worked great for my friend". We are glad that they got results, but, as mentioned earlier, this is not good evidence. You can reach us at the following e-mail address, info@SPEEDweightlossbook.com, or at our website, www.SPEEDweightlossbook.com.

To your health,

Jeff Thiboutot & Matt Schoeneberger

Co-authors of - S.P.E.E.D.: The Only Weight Loss Book Worth Reading

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