

Comprehension: Sickle Cell Disease

Read the passage carefully and answer the questions on it.



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Sickle Cell Disease

Sickle cell is more or less a black race disease. It has been *discovered* that it is only among black races that children are born with the blood group known as SS. This has been attributed to the presence of malaria. This is not just among the blacks in Africa. The percentage is only smaller in America and also in other parts of the world, like among the dark-skinned people in Asia.

One is not surprised that in many English and American herbal books, no mention is made of sickle cell. This must be so because the disorder is foreign to the authors of such books who themselves are whites. From the *diagnosis* made, one can safely take it that this disorder cannot be cured since it involves what is called the genes, which is a life-supporting force in the blood. The formation of the gene in the blood cannot be changed once it has taken place. In the blood of a sickler, the red blood cells are sickled like a saucer. They, therefore, find it difficult to take in essential and sufficient oxygen during the period when the blood must be renewed in the body. The lifespan of the red cells is, therefore, shorter than in normal cases. In very rare cases, particularly among women, a person with the AS blood group may develop the symptoms of an

SS. That is, she will have pains that are similar to what a sickler suffers from. In such cases, one observes that it is in the adult age of the patient and after stress or strenuous period. I have come across one such patient who said her crisis started after she gave birth to two babies within thirteen months. Often, the suffering of such a patient is prolonged during a crisis because they are treated for wrong diseases that have similar symptoms. Diagnosing and treating rheumatoid arthritis would be justified, as the symptoms are similar. But the patient's case will not improve at all till a change is made. Just like any illness, a good diet to aid the body to correct the malfunction is very essential. It is very important to adhere to natural foods, not denatured. All White Flour products always leave so much waste matter in the bloodstream. These should be strictly avoided. Milk, meat, and highly proteinous foods should be cut off the diet. No sugar should be taken. Honey is a very good substitute. It is pre-digested, energy-giving, and contains food nutrients required by the body.

A young lady from Aba had to make an extra effort to convince me that she was a sickler when she visited me. She just laughed and said that each time she was in a hospital for any other ailment, she had to convince the doctor that she was a sickler and each time she had to do a blood test to confirm her blood group. Why was this her experience? She looked so well that no one would believe easily that she was a sickler. And the reason why she looks so well is that she eats well, meaning she avoids what is not good for her. She confirmed that she does not take soft drinks of any kind, alcoholic drinks, meat, milk, and sugar. Bread and pastries are not part of her meals. Every sickler should make effort to avoid these food items. A lot of fruits and vegetables should be eaten on a daily routine. The grains are healthier than the tubers.

Questions & Answers

1. Why is the sickle cell disease regarded as a black race disease?

A – The sickle cell disease is peculiar to the black race.

2. What is the cause of sickle cell?

A – Sickle cell is caused by malformation of the genes.

3. Why would one think that sickle cell cannot be cured?

A – The disease cannot be cured because genetic malformation cannot be reversed.

4. How are the red blood cells of a sickler different from those of others?

A – The red blood cells of a sickler are sickled while those of others are not.

5. When would a person with the AS blood group develop the symptoms of an SS?

A – In very rare cases and particularly among women.

6. What does it mean to eat well?

A – To eat well means to eat only food that is good for one’s health and to avoid what is not

7. “... when the blood must be renewed in the body”.

i. What grammatical name is given to this expression as it is used in the passage?

A – Adverbial clause (of time)

ii. What is a function.

A – Modifies the verb phrase **take in**

8. For each of the following words find another word or phrase which means the same and which can replace it as it is used in the passage.

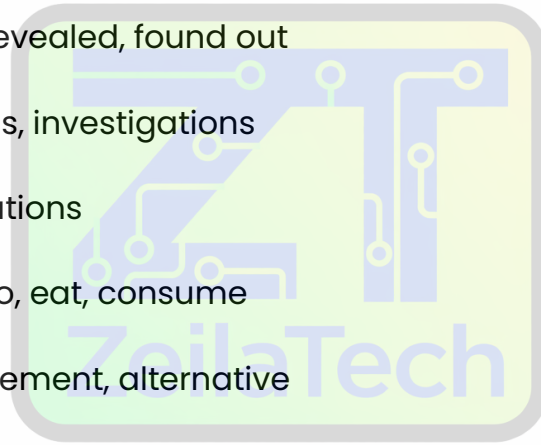
A. i. discovered – revealed, found out

ii. diagnosis – findings, investigations

iii. symptoms – indications

iv. adhere to – stick to, eat, consume

v. substitute – replacement, alternative



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