

In 2000, Mr. A's case was reviewed by the Parliamentary Ombudsman,

who concluded that some of the information that Mr. A had requested was

"unavailable" (the "file could not be traced")

but that as the product was no longer in medical use, this was not of consequence.

#The MCA agreed to release certain information to Mr.A and the Ombudsman deemed this resolution to be entirely satisfactory.

Whether Mr.A concurred with that viewpoint is less certain.

It appears that first-hand evidence (handwritten Adverse Drug Reaction reports) and various other data were transcribed (possibly sanitised?) on the grounds of confidentiality and a spurious concern about the effectiveness of the Yellow Card scheme being compromised (although in fact, the MCA had admitted in correspondence to the Arachnoiditis Trust that this scheme had significant limitations).

The MCA agreed to review their procedures for dealing with information requests, but what action, if any, they have taken to improve matters is unclear.

Complacency over the product now being in disuse is in fact misplaced, because iophendylate has been used recently to embolise arteriovenous malformations (California 1999 [\[1\]](#)) and to sclerose hepatic cysts (Philadelphia 2000

[\[2\]](#)

) - the latter a practice since the late 60s and one which amply demonstrates the body's severe fibrotic reaction to the dye.

Dr. Charles Burton wrote a further Editorial in 1999 entitled

"The Subarachnoid Space: "Salum Sanctorum" or Toxic Dump?" ([\[3\]](#)).

Stating that the toxicity of iophendylate was only marginally less than that of Lipiodol, he wrote

"It took a period of almost 50 years and about 5 million iophendylate myelograms before this fact even began to enter into the medical profession's awareness of the issue."

He further stated that there remains

"scant understanding"

which he attributes largely to

"obfuscation of facts"

by the pharmaceutical industry, which has prevented effective medico-legal challenges from reaching public awareness or indeed the courthouse.

In 2000, two articles relating to Myodil were published in the non-medical press.

In Spring, 2000 Corporate Watch carried an article entitled

"Toxic Drugs are good for you".

This outlined the story of Myodil manufacture and marketing in the UK, including the fact that files containing the licensing history of the product had been "mislaid" by the MCA.

The article noted that the product licence issued in June 1987 was still extant, allowing for the product to be manufactured and sold overseas.

The second article, in the Australian magazine, The Issue, told the story of Derek Morrison, who has been fighting for the victims (himself and his mother included) of Myodil for many years.

Again, the scurrilous history of the dye was detailed.

Also in 2000, Dr. Antonio Aldrete published a book on arachnoiditis ([\[4\]](#)).

In his chapter on oil-based myelography, Aldrete stated:

"the reluctance of the neuroradiology community to accept its morbidity earlier allowed it to be used for a period of 42 years, even when obvious evidence of neurotoxicity had been reported, having hundreds of thousands of patients permanently impaired by it."

[\[1\]](#) Paulsen RD, Steinberg GK, Norbash AM, Marcellus ML, Lopez JR, Marks MP, *Neurosurgery* 1999 Mar; 44(3): 479-84 Embolization of rolandic cortex arteriovenous malformation.

[2] Kaul VV, Friedenberf F, Rothstein KD, *Curr Treat Options Gastroenterol* 2000 Dec; 3 (6): 439-44 Hepatic Cysts

[3] Burton C The Subarachnoid Space: "Salum Sanctorum" or Toxic Dump?
Available at www.ilbnc.com/Pages/Editorials2001.htm

[4] Aldrete JA Arachnoiditis: The Silent Epidemic, *JGH Editores* 2000; p.51