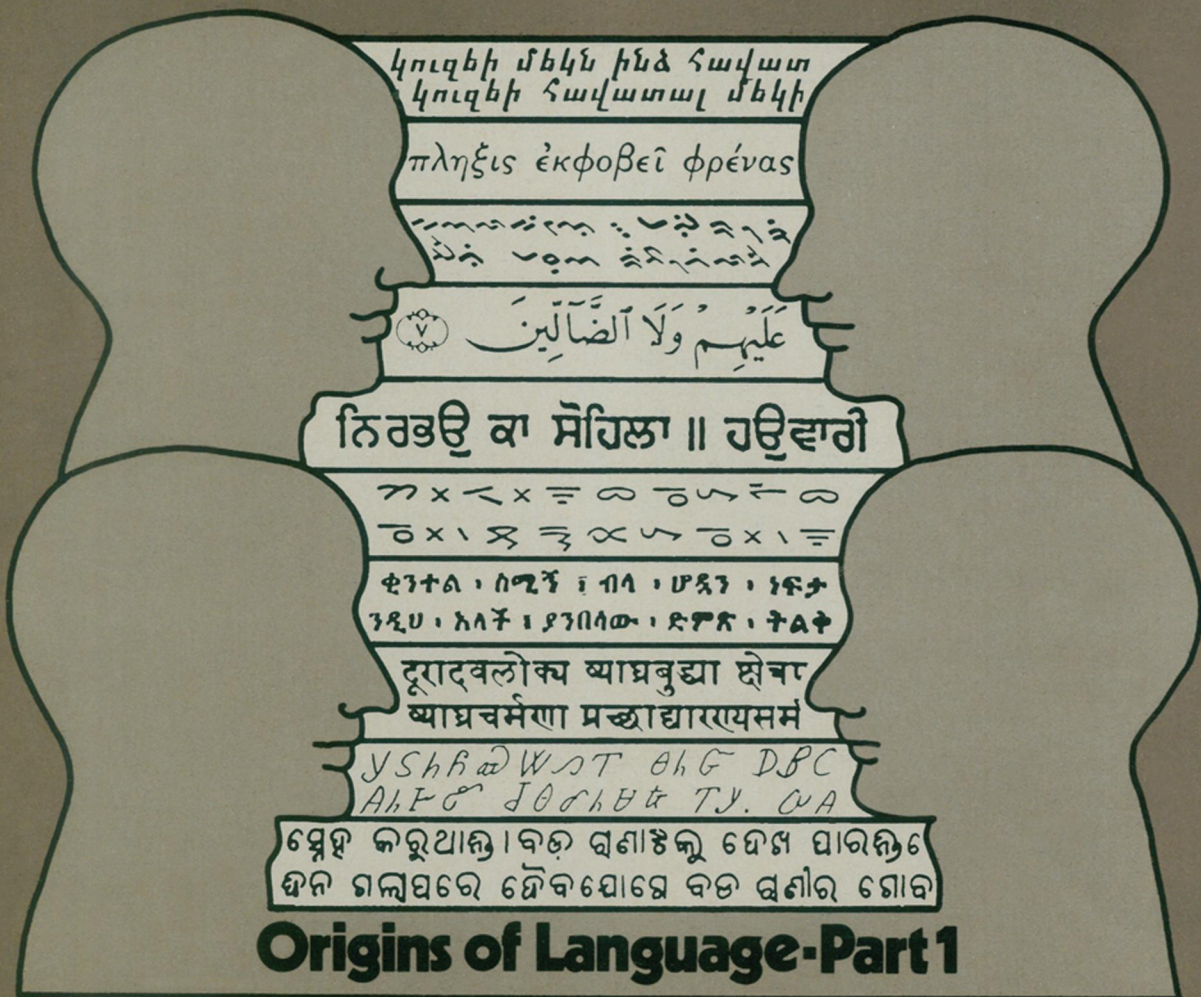


# science news

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## executive health

the report that tells you on what to watch

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### The B Vitamins . . . Part II

#### ON VITAMIN B<sub>6</sub> (PYRIDOXINE) "The sleeping giant of nutrition"

**PUBLISHER'S NOTE:** At intervals over the coming year we plan to give you a complete series of reports on the B vitamins, the so-called "nerve vitamins" of which this on B<sub>6</sub> is the second. An understanding of the B vitamins importance and their possible deficiency in one's diet are something we think you will find most helpful.

—Richard Stanton

With the cooperation of 64 urologists and 149 of their private patients, investigators from the Laboratory for Stone Research at Harvard recently turned up a striking finding.

Just one urinary stone can be an all-too-memorable affair, producing back pain, or renal colic with its agonizing intermittent pain in flank or kidney area radiating across the abdomen. It may produce nausea, vomiting, abdominal distention, and chills and fever as well.

The 149 patients didn't have just one stone. They were chronic urinary stone formers. They were selected for a special study because they had histories, in every case, of stone formation dating back five years.

They were given 10 milligrams of vitamin B<sub>6</sub> (also known as pyridoxine) to take daily, along with 300 milligrams of magnesium oxide. The study went on for more than 4½ years. And although none of the patients was known to be outrightly deficient in B<sub>6</sub>, stone production decreased from an average of 1.3 stones per patient per year before treatment to 0.10 stones per patient per year. Late in 1974, the investigators reported that the treatment not only was effective, it was "convenient, well-tolerated, inexpensive, and completely harmless."<sup>1</sup>

It was another new use for B<sub>6</sub>.

<sup>1</sup>W. H. G. Hooper, et al., "The Use of Magnesium Oxide-Pyridoxine in the Therapy for recurrent calcium oxalate renal colic." *Journal of Urology*, 1975.

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