

The injections began shortly after breakfast. As soon as Adolf Hitler had finished his bowl of oatmeal and linseed oil he would summon his personal physician, Theodor Morell.

The doctor would roll up his patient's sleeve in order to inject an extraordinary cocktail of drugs, many of which are these days classed as dangerous, addictive and illegal.

Every day for more than nine years, Dr Morell administered amphetamines, barbiturates and opiates in such quantities that he became known as the Reichsmaster of Injections. Some in Hitler's inner circle wondered if he wasn't trying to kill the Führer.

But Theodor Morell was far too devoted to Hitler to murder him. A grossly obese quack doctor with acrid halitosis and appalling body odour, he had first met the Führer at a party at the Berghof.

Hitler had long suffered from ill health, including stomach

cramps, diarrhoea and such chronic flatulence than he had to leave the table after each meal in order to expel vast quantities of wind.

His condition was aggravated by his unconventional diet. He had forsaken meat in 1931 after comparing eating ham to eating a human corpse. Henceforth, he ate large quantities of watery vegetables, pureed or mashed to a pulp. Dr Morell watched the Führer eat one such meal and then studied the consequences. 'Constipations and colossal flatulence occurred on a scale I have seldom encountered before,' he wrote. He assured Hitler he had miracle drugs that could cure all of his problems.

He began by administering little black tablets called Dr Küster's Anti-Gas pills. Hitler took sixteen a day, apparently unaware that they contained quantities of strychnine. Although they alleviated his wind – temporarily – they almost certainly triggered the attention lapses and sallow skin that were to mark his final years.

Morell next prescribed a type of hydrolysed *E. coli* bacteria called Mutaflor, which seemed to further stabilize the Führer's bowel problems. Indeed Hitler was so pleased with the doctor's work that he invited him to join the inner circle of Nazi elite. Henceforth, Morell was never far from his side.

Along with his stomach cramps, Hitler also suffered from morning grogginess. To alleviate this, Morell injected him with a watery fluid that he concocted from a powder kept in gold-foil packets. He never revealed the active ingredient in this medicine, called Vitamultin, but it worked wonders on every occasion it was administered. Within a few minutes, Hitler would arise from his couch invigorated and full of energy.

Ernst-Günther Schenck, an SS doctor, grew suspicious of

Dr Morell's miracle cures and managed to acquire one of the packets. When tested in a laboratory, it was found to be amphetamine.

Hitler was untroubled by what he was given, just so long as the drugs worked. It was not long before he became so dependent on Morell's 'cures' that he placed all his health problems entirely in the doctor's hands, with disastrous long-term consequences. He directed the invasion of Soviet Russia while being pumped with as many as eighty different drugs, including testosterone, opiates, sedatives and laxatives. According to the doctor's medical notebooks, he also administered barbiturates, morphine, bull semen and probiotics.

The most surprising drug that Dr Morell prescribed to the Führer was cocaine. This was occasionally used for medical ailments in 1930s Germany, but always in extremely low dosages and at a concentration of less than one per cent. Morell began administering cocaine to the Führer by means of eye-drops. Aware that Hitler expected to feel better after taking his drugs, he put ten times the amount of cocaine into the drops. Such a concentrated dose may well have triggered the psychotic behaviour that Hitler was to experience in his later years.

The Führer found cocaine extremely efficacious. According to a cache of medical documents that came to light in America in 2012 (including a forty-seven-page report written by Morell and other doctors who attended the Führer), Hitler soon began to 'crave' the drug. It was a clear sign that he was developing a serious addiction. As well as the eye-drops, he now began to snort powdered cocaine 'to clear his sinuses and soothe his throat'.

Cocaine may have induced a feeling of well-being but it did nothing to boost the Führer's lack of sexual drive. To overcome this embarrassing condition, Morell began giving him virility in-

jections. These contained extracts from the prostate glands of young bulls. Morell also prescribed a medicine called Testoviron, a medication derived from testosterone. Hitler would have himself injected before spending the night with Eva Braun.

The long-term effect of taking such drugs, particularly amphetamines, led to increasingly erratic behaviour. The most visible manifestation of this came at a meeting between Hitler and Mussolini in northern Italy. As Hitler tried to persuade his Italian counterpart not to change sides in the war, he became wildly hysterical. According to Third Reich historian Richard Evans: 'We can be pretty sure Morell gave some tablets to Hitler when he went to see Mussolini . . . [he was] completely hyper in every way, talking, gabbling, clearly on speed.'

As the war drew to a close, Hitler was in very poor health. Dependent on drugs, his arms were so punctured with hypodermic marks that Eva Braun accused Morell of being an 'injection quack'. He had turned Hitler into an addict. Yet the doctor continued to hero-worship his beloved Führer and remained with him in his Berlin bunker until almost the end.

Dr Morell was captured by the Americans soon after the fall of the Third Reich and interrogated for more than two years. One of the officers who questioned him was disgusted by his lack of personal hygiene.

Morell was never charged with war crimes and he died of a stroke in 1948, shortly after his release from prison. He left behind a cache of medical notebooks that reveal the extraordinary drug addiction of his favourite patient.

It is ironic that the man charged with restoring Hitler to good health probably did more than anyone else to contribute to his decline.